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ABSTRACT

This unit examines the economic and military concerns that have linked the Caribbean and Central America to the United States. The first section of the first booklet reviews the history of U.S. involvement in the region from the mid-1800s to the early 1960s. Part 2 focuses on the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 and presents a day-by-day account of the Cold War confrontation that brought the world dangerously close to nuclear war. Part 3 follows the course of Cold War politics in the Caribbean and Central America, and explains how the collapse of communism has recast U.S. relations in the region. Students research and role-play three policy options available to the United States, including: (1) "Keep Up Our Guard"; (2) "Extend a Helping Hand"; and (3) "Recognize Our Limitations." The Teacher's Resource Book contains a day-by-day lesson plan and student activities (10 days). An alternative 5-day plan may also be useful. (EH)

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CHOICES FOR THE 21st CENTURY

In The Shadow Of The Cold War: The Caribbean And Central America In U.S. Foreign Policy

SO 028 794

ALTERNATIVES FOR PUBLIC DEBATE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A program of the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies

Brown University, Box 1948, Providence, RI 02912

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James G. Blight, *Research Associate*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Vikram Chand, *Post-Doctoral Fellow, Watson Institute*

Christopher C. Coleman, *Political Affairs Officer*
United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Regina Cortina, *Associate Director*
Center for Latin American Studies, Watson Institute

Mark Garrison, *Former Director*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Senior Visiting Scholar*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Mark Kramer, *Research Associate*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Cathy Schneider, *Associate Professor of Political Science, Brown University*

Stephen Shenfield, *Research Associate*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Richard Smoke, *Research Director*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

This publication traces its roots to the work of James G. Blight. Beginning in 1986, Blight led a research effort on the Cuban missile crisis based on oral histories from U.S., Soviet, and Cuban officials. Hundreds of hours of interviews have provided Blight with a unique insight into the past, present, and future of U.S.-Soviet-Cuban relations. In almost every respect, *In the Shadow of the Cold War* owes its content and approach to the work of Blight and his co-author David A. Welch, Blight's chief collaborator and wife Janet Lang, and research associates Aaron Belkin, David Lewis, and Andrew Lynch.

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for the 21st Century Education Project

September 1995

Director
Susan Graseck

Curriculum Developer
Mark Malkasian

Director of School Programs
Patricia Keenan-Byrne

Program Associate
Lucy Mueller

Staff Associate
Anne Campau Prout

Office Assistant
Cynthia Manzotti

Contributing Author
Louise K. Davidson

Graphic Design Adviser
Richard Gann

The Choices for the 21st Century Education Project develops curricula for high schools and colleges on current foreign policy issues and offers workshops, institutes, and in-service programs for high school teachers. Course materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens.

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Thomas J. Biersteker
Director

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Latin America

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Part I: U.S. Relations with the Caribbean and Central America

Perhaps nowhere in the world have U.S. actions left a greater impact than in the Caribbean and Central America. The size and strength of the United States have cast an enormous shadow over the small, struggling states of the region. The people of the Caribbean and Central America have often found themselves swept up in the currents of U.S. history.

When Americans developed a taste for bananas, coffee, sugar, and other products of the tropics, American businessmen moved quickly to set up huge plantations in the Caribbean and Central America. When the needs of U.S. trade and defense required a shorter ocean route between the Atlantic and the Pacific, the United States took the lead in the construction of the Panama Canal in the early 1900s. And when Soviet expansion came to worry U.S. leaders after World War II, the United States provided large amounts of foreign aid to support friendly governments in the region.

Geography has made contact and interaction unavoidable. In miles, Washington is closer to the Central American capital of San Salvador than to San Francisco. Differences in political and economic development, however, have placed the two capital cities in worlds apart.

As the past has shown, our relations with Latin America in general have been marked by both the best and worst of American intentions. Simon Bolivar, the Venezuelan who liberated much of Spanish-speaking South America from Spain, foresaw this paradox early in the 19th century. "The United States," he predicted, "seems destined to plague us with miseries in the name of liberty."

In this unit, you will examine the economic and military concerns that have linked the Caribbean and Central America to the United States and reflect on the future direction of our country's relationship with the region. The background reading has been designed to help you reach your own conclusions about U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America.

Part I reviews the history of U.S. involvement in the region from the mid-1800s to the early 1960s. Part II focuses on the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962, presenting a day-by-day account of the Cold War confrontation that brought the world dangerously close to nuclear war. Finally, Part III follows the course of Cold War politics in the Caribbean and Central America, and explains how the collapse of communism has recast U.S. relations in the region.

From Colonialism to Statehood

European explorers first came into contact with the New World in the Caribbean and Central America. From the beginning, the encounter favored the Europeans. In Central America, the efforts of the Spanish empire to colonize the region met resistance from a well-organized society dominated by Mayan culture. By 1543, however, the Spanish had imposed control, uniting an area from what is today southern Mexico to Panama under a single jurisdiction.

When the Spanish empire crumbled in Mexico and South America, the United Provinces of Central America was formed in 1823. The federation disintegrated by 1838, giving rise to the independent states of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. (Panama, another Central American country, broke away from Colombia in 1903.)

In the Caribbean, Spain overwhelmed the native populations in the 1500s. In the next two centuries, the Spanish were joined by the British, French, and Dutch in colonizing the cluster of islands which stretches from the tip of Florida to the coast of Venezuela. Sugar cane became the most profitable crop of the islands, and African slaves were imported to work on huge plantations.

Political independence came very slowly to the region. A successful slave revolt in Haiti defeated the French colonial powers in 1804, but for much of the Caribbean independence was not achieved until the 20th century. Unlike Mexico, many countries of the Caribbean and Central America lacked a unifying sense of nationhood. Their small size and economic weakness left them vulnerable to pressures from their larger neighbors, especially the United States.

Manifest Destiny

From the earliest days of the republic, Americans felt that the United States was a unique force for good in the world. Many believed that the values of American democracy and individual liberty were destined to sweep across the continent and perhaps the entire Western Hemisphere. Believers in Manifest Destiny, a term first coined in the 1840s by a New York journalist, held that the territorial expansion of the United States was part of God's plan to spread the American experiment in self-government.

Manifest Destiny served as a guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy during the Mexican-American War, which was ignited in 1846 by a dispute over the boundary of Texas. After U.S. forces captured Mexico City the following year, Mexico was forced to give up not only its claims to Texas but also territories that now comprise the American Southwest and California. The peace settlement with Mexico, however, did not satisfy some in Washington. Twelve of fifty-two senators ultimately opposed the treaty, arguing that the United States should annex all of Mexico.

By the mid-1800s, the present outlines of the United States had been filled in, except for Alaska and Hawaii. With expansion to the west closed, attention turned toward the Caribbean and Central America. In the years leading up to the Civil War, Southerners sought to expand the plantation system to Cuba and Nicaragua, and in the process strengthen their position against the North. Cuba was especially attractive to the South, since the economy was already dominated by sugar, coffee and tobacco plantations using the labor of African slaves. In 1854, President Franklin Pierce expressed the U.S. desire to obtain Cuba from Spain. Pierce's declaration, known as the Ostend Manifesto, asserted that the United States had a reasonable right to buy Cuba for a fair price or even use force if the offer were refused.

More dramatic than the Ostend Manifesto were

National Archives

U.S. troops confront Mexican forces in the Mexican-American War.

the exploits of William Walker, a former newspaper editor and soldier of fortune. Walker assembled an army of fifty-eight men called the Phalanx of Immortals and sailed for Nicaragua in 1855. Walker gained control of the government and invited other Americans to join his army. Veterans of the Mexican-American War, especially Southerners, responded enthusiastically when Walker offered to award them tracts of land. Walker soon had 2,500 men in arms. In 1856, he legalized slavery and declared English the official language.

Although liberals in Central America originally saw Walker as a force for democratic change, his actions offended many regional leaders. They feared being overpowered by American influence. Central American countries banded together in 1857 to defeat Walker and forced him to return to the United States. He was executed three years later in Honduras after attempting to launch another military expedition.

The failure of Walker's grab for power in Nicaragua was a blow to the interests of the South. Many Southerners had hoped to first establish a plantation economy in Nicaragua and then expand the system to Cuba and other lands in the Caribbean and Central America.

> *The fate of Cuba depends upon the fate of Nicaragua, and the fate of the South depends upon that of Cuba. This is the hour of destiny.*
> —*New Orleans Delta*

The Spanish-American War

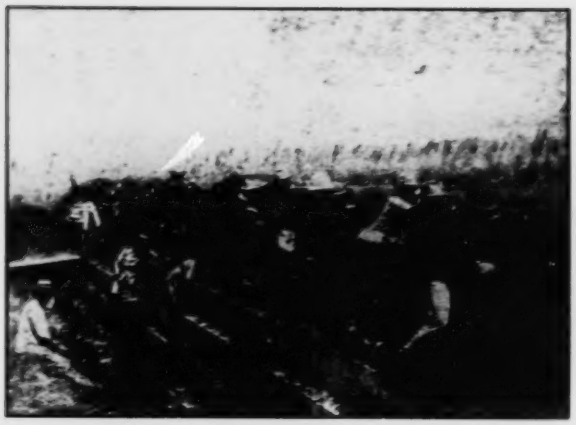
The victory of the North in the Civil War put an end to the South's plans of expansion and spurred on the emergence of the United States as an industrial giant. More than ever, Americans felt their country had a special mission to promote democratic values in the world. The late 19th century was also a time of fierce competition among the major powers of Europe. Their colonial empires in Asia and Africa required naval power to protect them. Britain maintained the largest navy during the 1800s, but Germany was rapidly closing the gap. In this atmosphere of mistrust and suspicion, Americans feared that the European nations would extend their struggle to the Western Hemisphere.

The Monroe Doctrine had long served as a warning for Europeans to stay out of the Americas. When it was originally proclaimed by President James Monroe in 1823, the United States depended on Britain to enforce the policy. By the end of the century, however, new British settlements in Central America and a boundary dispute between Venezuela and the British colony of Guiana raised U.S. concerns about British plans. Moreover, the French and Germans were seeking to increase their influence in the Caribbean and Central America.

Among the colonial powers of Europe, Spain was the chief target of American resentment. Not only did the Spanish rule Cuba and Puerto Rico with a heavy hand, but many Americans saw the Spanish monarchy as backward and corrupt.

Cuban attempts to overthrow Spain's control attracted widespread support among Americans during the 19th century. When a new revolt began in 1895, American sympathies again went out to the Cubans fighting for independence. Spanish efforts to crush the rebellion in 1896 raised the stakes further. A Spanish army of 200,000 men attacked villages where support for the revolt was strong, and herded hundreds of thousands of peasants into fortified towns. The Spanish also burned crops and slaughtered thousands of farm animals in hopes of destroying the roots of the uprising.

By 1898, the war in Cuba had stalemated. The Spanish held the cities while the Cuban rebels controlled the countryside. Meanwhile, newspapers in the United States inflamed the public with details of Spanish brutality. "Blood on the roadsides, blood in the fields, blood on the doorsteps, blood, blood, blood," wrote the *New York World*. When the U.S. battleship *Maine* exploded mysteriously in Havana harbor in February 1898, the press rushed to blame the Spanish. The mounting public pressure was too much for President William McKinley to resist. Even though Spain was ready to accept U.S. demands, he asked Congress to declare war.



Above left: U.S. *troops in Cuba firing on Spanish forces during the Spanish-American War.* (Historical Association of Southern Florida)

Above right: *Spanish cavalry on guard against Cuban rebels.* (Historical Association of Southern Florida)

Left: *U.S. sailors beside the mast of the Maine in Havana Harbor.* (Historical Association of Southern Florida)

Below: *U.S. soldiers recovering from yellow fever during the Spanish-American War. Disease killed ten times more Americans during the course of the war than Spanish arms.* (University of Miami Library)

Facing page: *Cuban rebels on horseback.* (University of Miami Library)

McKinley's war goals, however, differed from the popular call to intervene on the side of Cuban independence. McKinley believed that the United States should take military action to end the conflict and establish a stable government. Congress, meanwhile, feared that McKinley's real intent was to make Cuba a permanent U.S. possession. While giving President McKinley the authority to enter the war in 1898, Congress also passed an amendment requiring the United States to grant Cuba self-government once the Spanish colonial army was defeated.

America's empire

The Spanish-American War lasted only four months and ended with a decisive victory for the United States. Spain and the United States concluded a peace treaty which turned over the Spanish colonies of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, as well as Cuba, to U.S. control. As Americans quickly discovered, though, governing an empire was much more difficult than conquering one. Particularly in Cuba, the conclusion of the Spanish-American War failed to lay the foundation for a peaceful future. Many Cubans had already invested thirty years of their lives into the independence movement when U.S. troops arrived in 1898. Their struggle had united supporters of independence throughout the island. As might be expected, Cuban nationalists were deeply disappointed when the United States negotiated an end to Spanish rule without their participation. Many felt they had merely traded one colonial power for another.

The U.S. military occupation of Cuba began in 1899. From the beginning, Americans brought their advanced technology and administrative expertise to the island. Roads and telegraph lines were built, finances reorganized, schools opened, sanitation improved, and yellow fever stamped out. The United States provided benefits that the Cubans could not have provided for themselves. At the same time, U.S. officials sought to create a political system that would closely follow Washington's guidance. Voting rights were given to only 5 percent of Cuba's population. Nonetheless, elections in 1900 produced an assembly that strongly favored immediate independence for Cuba. The McKinley administration now found itself in a quandary. White House policymakers wanted to protect U.S. business and security interests in Cuba, but the American public expected Washington to establish a strong democratic government on the island.

U.S. concerns about the future of Cuba were ultimately settled, but in Washington rather than Cuba. Under a plan crafted largely by the U.S. State Department, Cuba was to receive independence only after accepting a number of limitations. The plan, which came to be known as the Platt Amendment, gave the United States the right to oversee the Cuban economy, veto international commitments, and intervene whenever necessary "for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty." The United States was also allowed to build a naval base on the southeastern tip of the island at Guantanamo Bay. News of the proposed amendment sparked angry demonstrations and protests in Cuba, but the McKinley administration insisted that the Platt Amendment was the price Cubans would have to pay for ending the U.S. military occupation of their island. In 1901, the amendment passed the Cuban assembly by one vote.

The Platt Amendment opened the door to greater American investment in Cuba's economy. By 1928, American companies produced 75 percent of Cuba's sugar — the island's leading crop. Cubans who had fought in the independence struggle found few opportunities in an economy dominated by Americans and recent immigrants from Spain. They came to resent the alliance between foreign businesses and wealthy Cuban plantation owners. Their frustration would later emerge as a powerful force in Cuban politics.

U.S. Exerts Influence

The American experience in Cuba proved to be the first of many U.S. involvements in the Caribbean and Central America. Among the boldest was the construction of the Panama Canal. Interest in a canal across the isthmus of Central America had steadily grown since the United States had expanded across the continent to the Pacific Ocean in 1848. Events during the Spanish-American War had demonstrated the military importance of a canal. The U.S. cruiser *Oregon*, for example, took nearly ten weeks to round Cape Horn and join the battle against the Spanish navy.

Nicaragua had originally seemed the most likely site for the canal. When President Theodore Roosevelt came to the White House in 1901, though, he was attracted to a failed canal project in Panama that a French company had begun in 1880. Roosevelt paid $40 million in 1902 for the canal rights and then sought to lease land in Panama, which at that time was a province of Colombia. The Colombian senate, however, turned down Roosevelt's offer of $10 million in cash and $250,000 in annual rent. Colombia's decision alarmed not only Roosevelt, but also officials of the French company and Panamanian leaders. The three parties joined forces to revolt against Colombian rule. Panamanians seized power in the province, an official of the French canal company drafted a constitution, and the United States immediately recognized the new government, placing it under the protection of ten U.S. gunboats. Congress later questioned the U.S. role in the Panamanian revolution, but work on the canal proceeded until its completion in 1914.

> *I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate...and while the debate goes on, the canal does also.*
>
> *—Theodore Roosevelt*

The Panama Canal drew the United States closer to the Caribbean and Central America. As American economic and military power increased in the first decades of the 1900s, U.S. leaders increasingly came to view the region as their country's back yard. The Caribbean and Central America became both an area of vital national interest and a testing ground for cultivating American values.

Theodore Roosevelt set the stage for increased U.S. involvement during his State of the Union address to Congress in 1904. In what came to be known as the Roosevelt Corollary, he warned that the United States would act as an "international police power" to maintain stability in the Western Hemisphere. Roosevelt soon put his pledge into practice, sending U.S. troops to Cuba in 1906 after supporters of the Cuban Liberal Party rose up in opposition to the re-election of the Conservative Party president.

World War I raised new concerns about the security of the Caribbean and Central America. The commander of the U.S. Marines Corps was convinced that Germany had provoked chaos in Haiti and Santo Domingo (now the Dominican Republic) in order to set up military bases on the island. President Woodrow Wilson ordered troops into the two countries in 1914 and 1916 respectively. Haiti became a U.S. protectorate (a country that is watched over and partly controlled by a stronger one). A U.S. military government was installed in Santo Domingo.

U.S. involvement in Nicaragua left a particularly lasting impact. Originally, U.S. troops landed in 1910 to back a pro-U.S. government. The force soon grew to 3,000 soldiers, and the Nicaraguan government increasingly came under the management of U.S. experts and advisers. Opponents of U.S.

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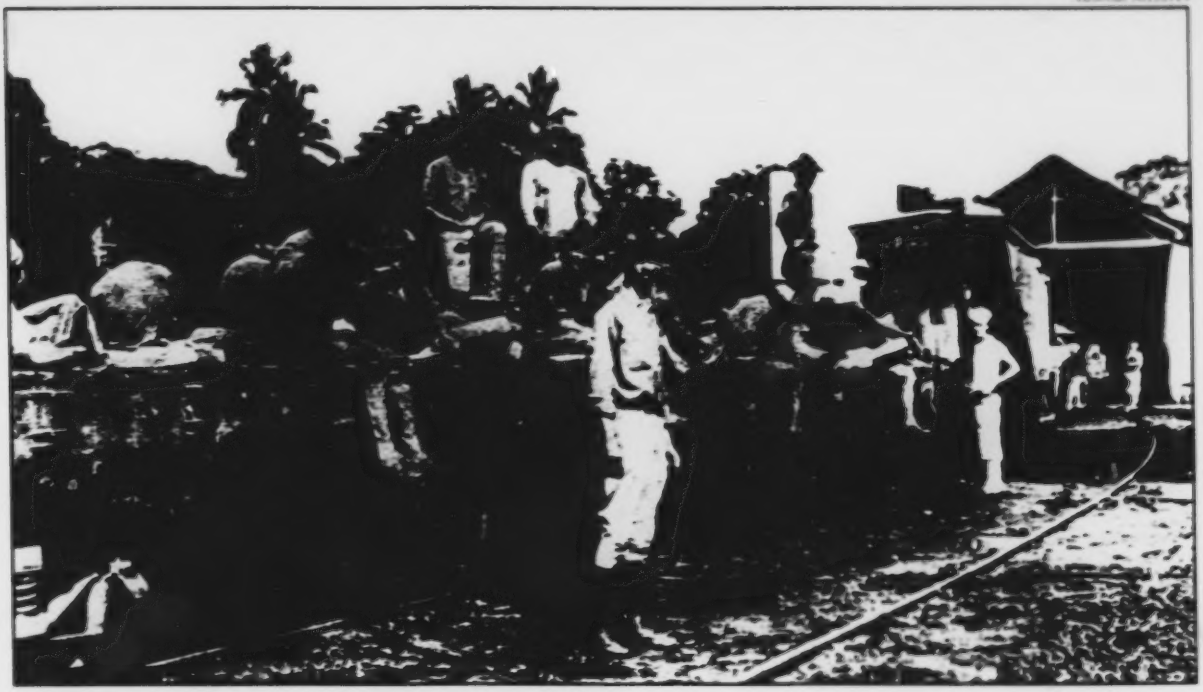
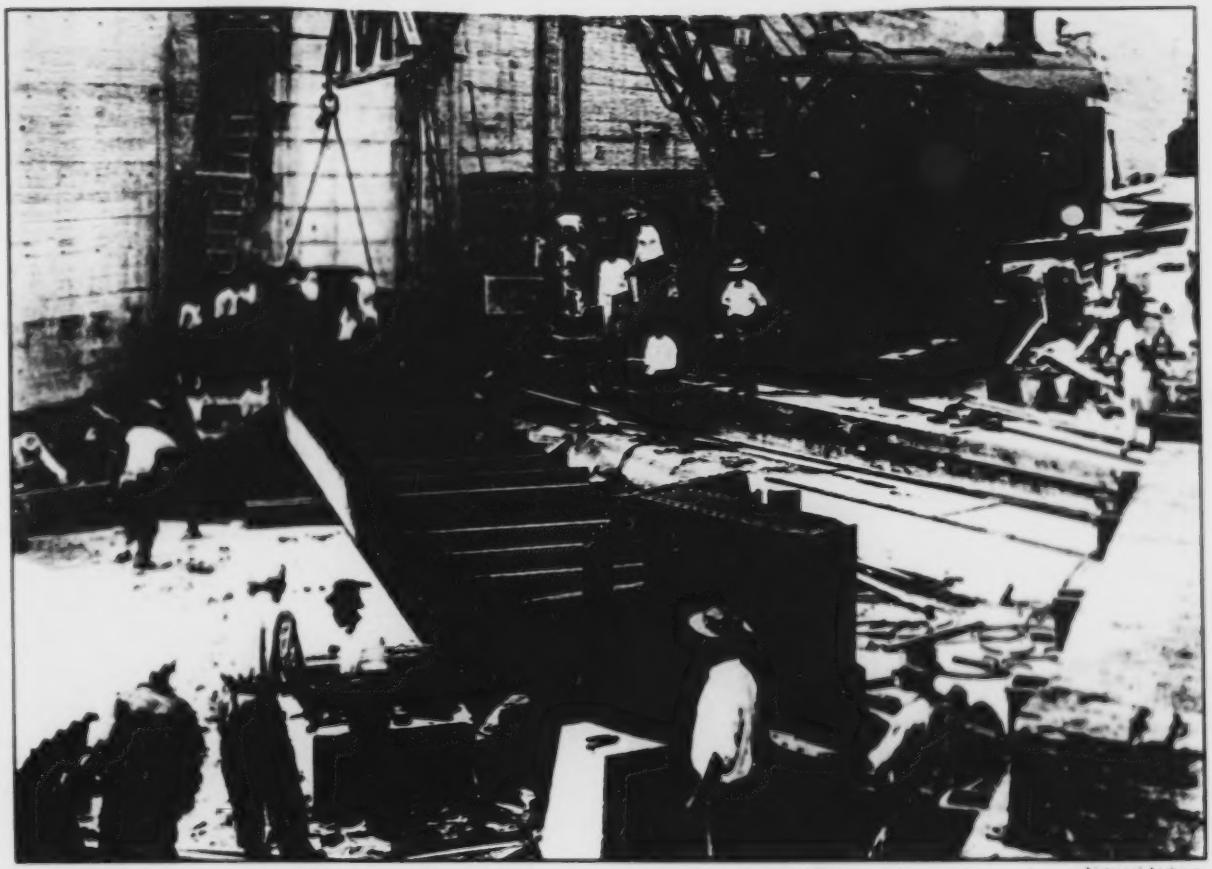


U.S. Marines aboard a train in Nicaragua in 1912.



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Construction of the Panama Canal nearing completion in 1915.

domination in Nicaragua turned to guerrilla warfare in 1927. The United States committed 6,000 soldiers against a small rebel army led by Augusto César Sandino, and eighteen U.S. warplanes conducted history's first dive-bombing attacks. The guerrillas, however, moved too quickly and the terrain proved too difficult for the Americans to gain a decisive victory. Frustrated, the United States withdrew its forces in 1933. Before leaving, though, the Americans set up the Nicaraguan National Guard to police the country. The force soon became the private army of its commander, Anastasio Somoza. In 1934, Somoza lured Sandino to a meeting in Nicaragua's capital with a promise of peace talks, and then assassinated him. By 1937, Somoza had toppled Nicaragua's elected leader and installed himself as president. With control of the National Guard, Somoza intimidated his opponents and built the framework of a family dynasty that ran Nicaragua until 1979.

Economic Giant

The American presence in the Caribbean and Central America during the early 1900s was more economic than military. The United Fruit Company, operating banana plantations throughout the region, became the largest agricultural enterprise in the world. Along with its rival, Standard Fruit, the company built highways, railroads, ports, and communications facilities. Schools, hospitals, and housing were constructed for the workers.

American businesses linked the economies of the area to the outside world, boosted the production of export crops, and created thousands of jobs. Transportation and communication improvements opened up new possibilities for development. Meanwhile, U.S. officials worked toward establishing sound financial institutions and effective government.

At the same time, the U.S. presence had negative consequences. American companies in the Caribbean and Central America meddled in local politics and relied on the U.S. military to support their interests. In Cuba, 60 percent of the property in the countryside belonged to Americans by 1905. At one United Fruit plantation there, even the post office and twenty armed soldiers were based on company land. In Honduras, an American

United Fruit Company

The story of the United Fruit Company is intertwined with the history of Central America and the Caribbean. The company has its origins in the late 1800s, a time when leaders of the region were seeking to create new economic links with the outside world. In Costa Rica, the government offered an American businessman, Minor Keith, 800,000 acres to build a railroad from the capital to the Atlantic Ocean. Keith planted bananas on much of his land, and joined with another trading firm to form the United Fruit Company in 1899. United Fruit set the pace in the construction of railroads and port facilities up and down the Caribbean coast of Central America. The company also helped governments control tropical diseases.

United Fruit soon became known as "The Octopus" for its domination of much of Central America and the Caribbean. By the 1920s, the company not only controlled the rail system, ports, and communications of the region, but also played an important role in political affairs. In Honduras, presidents could not be elected without United Fruit support, while in Guatemala the government relied on the company for loans. During the 1970s, banana-producing countries tried to assert their economic independence. They complained that exporting countries received only seventeen cents of every dollar spent on bananas and demanded a greater share of the profits. In response, United Brands (the successor of United Fruit) joined with other exporting giants in threatening to close down their operations. Countries in the region recognized that they could not afford to lose markets for their products in North America. The emergence of new industries in the Caribbean and Central America has loosened the economic hold of Chiquita Brands International (the successor of United Brands), but the company remains a powerful force.

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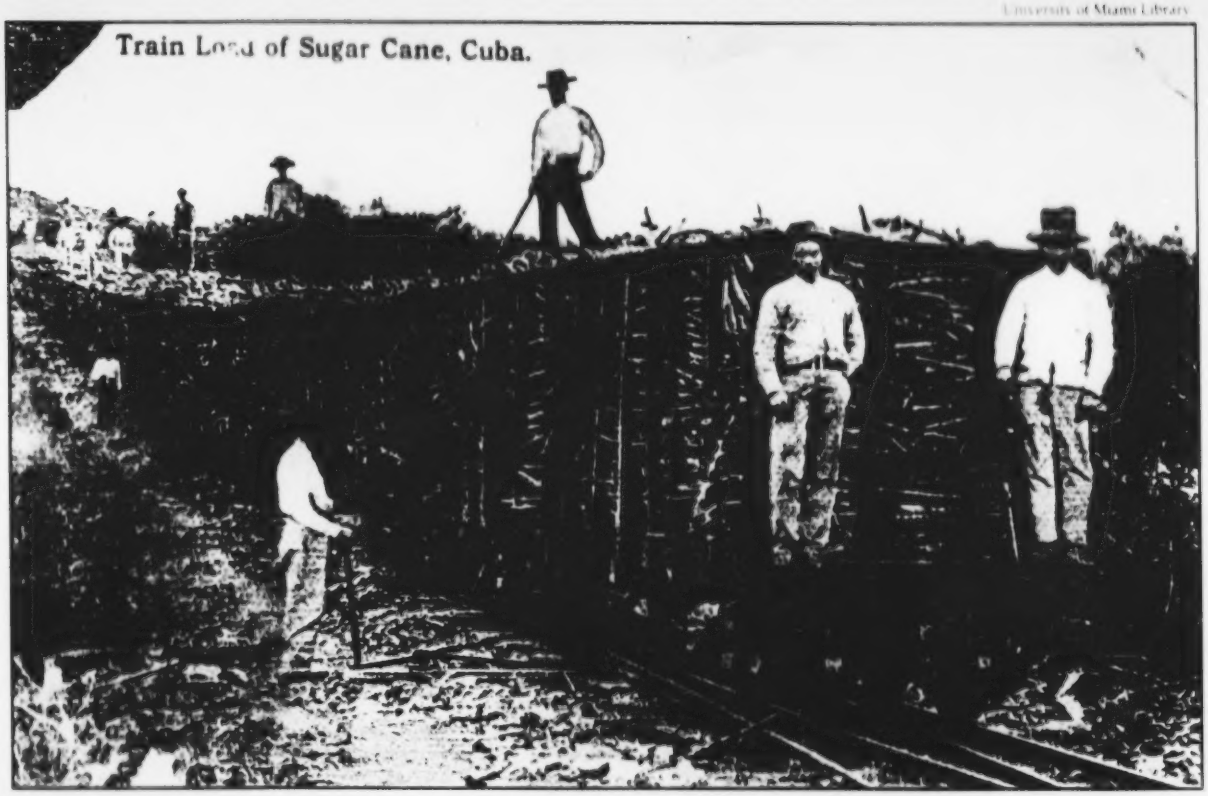

A trainload of sugar cane in Cuba around the turn of the century.

commanded the army and the U.S. dollar was legal currency. Economic development often proved imbalanced and smothered local initiative. Most of Central America's highways and railroads connected the plantations to Caribbean ports, but did not serve national capitals. The emphasis on export crops left countries dependent on a single product. During the Depression of the 1930s, for example, a fall in the price of Cuban sugar from twenty-two cents a pound to half a cent pushed millions of Cubans into desperate poverty.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt brought changes to U.S. relations with Latin America. Under his Good Neighbor Policy, Roosevelt repealed the Platt Amendment, offered government loans to Latin American countries, and pledged not to intervene in the region. The policy withstood a major challenge in 1938, when Mexico took over the property of American oil companies in the country. Despite pressure from business interests to send in troops, Roosevelt negotiated a settlement with Mexico that provided payment to the oil companies.

Cold War Tensions

World War II transformed U.S. foreign policy, including American relations with the Caribbean and Central America. The conclusion of the war in 1945 left the United States the most powerful country on earth. Soon after the defeat of Nazi Germany, however, the United States faced a new challenge from its former ally, the Soviet Union. Despite losing 27 million people during the war, the Soviets had swept through Eastern Europe on their way to victory over the Nazis, and possessed the largest army in the world. U.S. leaders feared that the Soviets would attempt to extend communist rule over the entire continent.

By the late 1940s, a tense Cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union had cast a shadow over international relations. Containing the influence of the Soviet Union and the spread of communism became the top priority of the United States. U.S. leaders were determined to prevent communism from gaining a foothold in the Western

The Caribbean and Central America.

Hemisphere. They believed that the establishment of a single communist regime would set off a chain reaction, toppling governments friendly to the United States one after the other. According to this "domino theory," communism could eventually reach our border with Mexico.

The struggle with the Soviets caused the United States to be more concerned about stability in the Caribbean and Central America than democratic reform. U.S. Cold War policy was first illustrated in 1947, when the president of Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza, refused to honor election results in his country. Instead, Somoza had reclaimed power with the help of the Nicaraguan National Guard. For a few months, President Harry Truman denied Somoza's regime official recognition, but in the end the United States resumed close relations with Nicaragua. The Truman administration worried that instability in the region would open the door to communist revolution.

That same year, the United States unified the Western Hemisphere in a mutual defense treaty known as the Rio Pact. The agreement called on the countries of Latin America to come to the aid of a neighbor under attack. The Rio Pact was one of Washington's first steps designed to enlist Latin America on the U.S. side in the Cold War. In 1948, Washington took the lead in forming the Organization of American States (OAS) to further strengthen alliances within the Western Hemisphere. The United States also signed military treaties with ten different countries in the region. Under these agreements, the United States supplied equipment and training to armies in Latin America, and the governments pledged to reduce trade with the Soviet bloc.

Cold War tensions only intensified during the 1950s. U.S. troops fought against communism in Korea from 1950 to 1953, eventually settling for the division of North and South Korea that persists today. At the same time, both the United States and the Soviet Union worked relentlessly to build up their arsenals of nuclear weapons.

Intervention in Guatemala

Closer to home, the United States saw another threat to its security in Guatemala. Since 1950, Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz had been pursuing an economic reform program. His government had confiscated the unplanted fields of large landowners, and divided the land among 100,000 peasant families.

The United Fruit Company lost land under the reform, and claimed Arbenz was a communist sympathizer. The United States grew particularly concerned when Guatemala received a shipment of weapons from communist Czechoslovakia in 1954. Many U.S. policymakers feared that the Soviets were courting Guatemala to gain an ally in the region.

In response, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) began a secret operation to overthrow the Arbenz government. A few hundred Guatemalan exiles were given military training at a base in neighboring Honduras. Pilots were paid to conduct bombing raids on the Guatemalan capital to undermine the government's resolve. Meanwhile, CIA radio broadcasts convinced Arbenz that a huge rebel force was preparing to invade. In less than two months, the CIA campaign forced Arbenz to flee the country. An army colonel friendly to the United States, Carlos Castillo, replaced him in 1954.

Castillo returned the land of the United Fruit Company and signed a defense pact with the United States. From Washington's point of view, the overthrow of Arbenz had succeeded in removing a potentially troublesome regime. For Guatemala, however, the events of 1954 only deepened the country's divisions. Castillo himself was assassinated in 1957. In the years that followed, large landowners increasingly turned to the military to crush calls for land reform. By the 1960s, paramilitary squads were killing thousands of peasants, mostly Indians, in a desperate attempt to maintain the status quo. Within Latin America, U.S. policy received much of the blame for Guatemala's plight.

Cuban Revolution Challenges U.S.

U.S. worries in the Caribbean and Central America, however, did not end with Arbenz. On the contrary, Cuba was an even bigger concern in the 1950s. Politically, Cuba had been fairly stable since

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The Organization of American States meeting in 1961.

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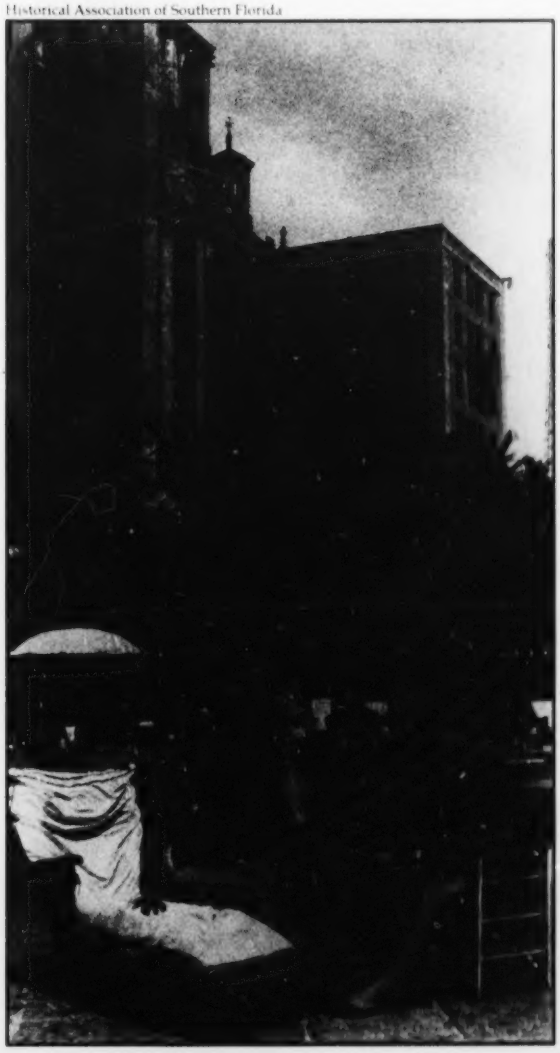
Fulgencio Batista seized power from a reform-minded government in 1934. Washington supported Batista as a strongman who would maintain order on the island and not upset U.S. interests. Even after Batista's defeat in elections in 1944, Cuba remained close to the United States. At the same time, though, official corruption and graft were mounting. Hope for reform suffered a setback when Batista staged a coup to take power in 1952. Few Cubans expected the Batista regime to tolerate democratic change in their country. As a result, resentment against the government built up during the 1950s.

Few Americans were aware of Cuba's political troubles. In the United States, Cuba was known best as a glamorous resort. A boom in tourism to the island began in the 1920s and reshaped Cuba's image. Cuba was associated with casinos, nightclubs, and tropical beaches. American money helped provide Havana with more Cadillacs per capita than any city in the world during the 1950s. But the wealth also brought problems to Cuba. By the 1950s, American organized crime was firmly established on the island, along with drugs and prostitution.

Historical Association of Southern Florida



American tourists enjoy the tropical sun at a Havana hotel in the 1950s.

Economically, Cuba could claim one of the highest per capita incomes in Latin America. In reality, however, many Cubans could not find full-time employment, especially in the countryside. Meanwhile, many middle-class Cubans depended on expensive imports from the United States to maintain their lifestyle, which was far below the standard of their American neighbors. With inflation rising, prospects for the future were not reassuring. Cuba in the 1950s relied more than ever on the export of sugar. Price increases in the 1940s had brought prosperity to the island but, by the same token, the ups and downs of the sugar market in the 1950s badly shook the economy.

Castro's uprising

Opposition to Batista developed gradually in the 1950s. Most Cuban political parties gave up on the democratic process when Batista rigged elections in 1954. The next year, student demonstrations were broken up by the police and army. Seeing few alternatives, a handful of opponents to the regime turned to armed struggle. One of the most noteworthy was a young lawyer named Fidel Castro. The son of a Spanish immigrant who rose from poverty to become a wealthy landowner, Castro attended Cuba's top schools. Tall and athletic, he was even offered $5,000 by the New York Giants to play professional baseball in the United States. Castro's true interest, however, was politics.

Castro first captured public attention with an almost suicidal attack on an army base in 1953. Castro hoped that a dramatic blow against the Batista regime would spark an insurrection throughout Cuba. The assault, however, failed to set off a

larger uprising. Instead, most of Castro's nearly 200 followers were killed, and Castro himself was jailed for two years. In 1956, Castro and eighty fellow revolutionaries launched another attack against Batista, sailing a small yacht from Mexico to Cuba. Most were killed by Batista's forces before reaching shore. Without arms or supplies, the eighteen survivors of the landing straggled into Cuba's isolated eastern mountains. Far from the center of power, Castro called for a new government. Batista's human rights violations also turned American opinion against him, and led the United States to halt arms deliveries to Cuba in March. Facing opposition from almost every direction, Batista had little hope for survival. On January 1, 1959, he resigned and fled the country. Castro's forces quickly assumed the leadership of the revolutionary movement and on January 8, Castro entered Havana in triumph.

Historical Association of Southern Florida

Since the early 1900s, the United States has maintained a naval base at Guantanamo Bay on the strategic southeastern tip of Cuba.

began his guerrilla war by attacking outposts of the unpopular Rural Guard. Thousands of landless peasants joined the struggle against Batista in 1957 and 1958, especially after the government forced many villagers into military camps.

At the same time that Castro's movement was gathering strength in the countryside, other opponents of Batista disrupted life in the cities. Government offices were bombed, power lines cut, and trains derailed. Batista responded with still greater violence and repression against those who challenged his rule. By 1958, even factions in the military and police were joining the opposition. In February of that year, Catholic bishops in Cuba

Most Americans, even government officials, welcomed the revolution in Cuba. Castro was seen as a brave nationalist and his movement was expected to place Cuba along the path of democratic reform. In April 1959, Castro visited the United States at the invitation of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He spoke at Harvard and Princeton universities, met with CIA officials, and was praised by the American press. In fact, however, Castro's policies were on a collision course with U.S. interests. From early in his political career, Castro had loudly opposed foreign domination of Cuba's economy. The United States was the inevitable target of his protests. Before coming to the United

States, Castro had criticized Washington for supporting the Batista regime.

Collision course

As Castro strengthened his grip on power in 1959, his revolution became more worrisome for U.S. policymakers. An agrarian reform program put half the land of Cuba under state control and prohibited foreign ownership. Moderate voices in the government were gradually replaced or forced to leave the country. By the end of 1960, Castro had taken over major businesses on the island, both foreign and domestic. At the same time, Cuba was developing new ties with the Soviet Union. In February 1960, the Soviets agreed to import sugar from Cuba and give Castro $100 million in credits to buy industrial equipment. Cuba also began purchasing weapons from communist countries.

For their part, Americans felt betrayed by Castro's actions. According to the U.S. viewpoint, the United States had aided the struggle to overthrow Batista. Moreover, most Americans believed that their country had played a positive role in Cuba during the 20th century, first ensuring Cuban independence and then investing in the economic development of the island. Castro's nationalization of American businesses was seen as a slap in the face not only to U.S. interests in Cuba but to Washington's overall policy in Latin America. Even more provocative was Castro's friendliness with the United States' Cold War enemy, the Soviet Union.

By early 1960, many U.S. policymakers believed that Castro had to be removed. In July, the United States prohibited imports of Cuban sugar, and three months later barred exports of most American products to the island. In January 1961, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba after Castro insisted that the staff at the U.S. embassy in Havana be reduced. Meanwhile, the United States launched a secret campaign to overthrow Castro. The confrontation burst into the international spotlight in April 1961, when the United States sponsored an invasion of Cuba by 1,400 Cuban exiles. The attack brigade, trained by the CIA and launched in a flotilla of run-down boats from Guatemala, was designed to establish a beachhead in southern Cuba and set off a popular revolt against Castro. Instead, the invaders at the Bay of Pigs were met by 35,000 Cuban troops and defeated within three days.

The Bay of Pigs was an international embarrassment for the new administration of President John F. Kennedy. The failure was also a symbol of the changing relationship between the United States and Latin America. Cuba was more than a challenge to U.S. power in the region. Rather, the island had become a flashpoint for American anxiety about the world. Castro's revolution was a rejection of our country's efforts to bring American skills and values to the Caribbean and Central America. The U.S. role in the world seemed to be under attack. The fact that Castro was replacing the U.S. presence in Cuba with Soviet influence added another, more dangerous, dimension to the conflict.

Historical Association of Southern Florida

President Kennedy (foreground) greets newly released Cuban prisoners of war captured during the failed invasion at the Bay of Pigs.

Washington vs. Havana

Much of the conflict between the United States and Cuba in the early 1960s took place far from public view, especially after the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion. In the United States, President Kennedy approved a secret campaign in the fall of 1961 to overthrow the Castro regime. Classified as Operation Mongoose, the effort was directed by the CIA. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy summarized the intent of the plan: "My idea is to stir things up on the island with espionage, sabotage, general disorder, run and operated by Cubans themselves." Under Operation Mongoose, the CIA and Cuban exiles worked to undermine the Cuban economy and focus popular anger against the Castro government. At the same time, some agents tried to enlist organized crime leaders in a plot to assassinate Castro. One failed scheme centered on poison pills which were smuggled into the kitchen of a hotel cafeteria where Castro often ate. Other plans featured deadly bacteria imbedded in Castro's skin-diving suit and favorite cigars, a seashell packed with explosives, and a pen firing poisoned darts.

Castro's strategy against Washington took a different approach. Rather than striking directly against the United States, Castro jabbed at U.S. allies in Latin America. Until 1961, propaganda served as Cuba's most important weapon. Castro stressed the need for revolution throughout the Western Hemisphere and, in the Declaration of Havana, claimed that the United States was blocking progress in the region. After the Bay of Pigs invasion, Cuba began giving revolutionary movements more active support. A training school for guerrillas was established and Cuban military advisers were sent to aid rebels in Guatemala. By 1963, much of Castro's energy was aimed at bringing down the democratic government of Rómulo Betancourt in Venezuela. Cuba shipped arms to communist guerrillas there in hopes of disrupting free elections. According to Castro, Cuba was only defending its revolution against the United States. In 1964, he told an American reporter, "Of course we engage in subversion, the training of guerrillas, propaganda! Why not? This is exactly what you are doing to us."

U.S. Involvement in the Caribbean and Central America

1823 In the Monroe Doctrine, President James Monroe announces that the United States will oppose further attempts by the European powers to establish colonies or intervene in the political affairs of countries in the Western Hemisphere.

1848 U.S. victory in the Mexican-American War forces Mexico to cede half of its territory to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

1850 The United States and Britain sign the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, stating that the two countries will share control of any future canal route through Central America. (A treaty signed in 1901 allowed the United States to build a canal through the region alone.)

1854 The United States issues the Ostend Manifesto, communicating to Spain, France, and Britain its desire to purchase Cuba from Spain for a fair price. The United States claims the right to use force to acquire Cuba for the sake of the "internal peace and existence" of the federal union if the offer is refused.

1855 The Panamanian Railway, built by an American company, is opened. The railroad facilitates transportation between the east and west coasts of the United States, and boosts trade for Central American ports on the Pacific Ocean.

1857 William Walker's forces are defeated by the combined armies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Walker had gained power in Nicaragua two years earlier.

1878 The first major rebellion in Cuba ends, as the Spanish maintain control after ten years of bitter fighting.

1889 The French Panama Canal Company abandons its efforts to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The same year, an American firm is established to study the possibility of building a trans-oceanic canal through Nicaragua.

1895 Rebels in Cuba launch a second revolt against Spanish rule. American newspapers generate widespread public sympathy for the cause of Cuban independence.

1898 The United States gains Spanish colonial possessions in the Caribbean and the Pacific after a decisive victory in the Spanish-American War.

1901 In the Platt Amendment, the United States grants Cuba independence after Cuban leaders accept U.S. supervision of the island's foreign policy and economy.

1903 Rebels in Panama gain independence from Colombia with the support of U.S. warships. The new Panamanian government signs a treaty allowing the United States to build a canal through the country.

1904 In the Roosevelt Corollary, President Theodore Roosevelt justifies the right of the United States to intervene in the affairs of countries in the Western Hemisphere as necessary to maintain order.

1914 The Panama Canal opens, linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

1927 U.S. forces in Nicaragua reach a peak of 6,000 men to fight a local guerrilla army.

1933 The United States pursues the Good Neighbor Policy toward Latin America, withdrawing forces from Nicaragua, and repealing the Platt Amendment the following year.

1934 With U.S. backing, Fulgencio Batista, a sergeant in the Cuban army, takes power in Cuba.

1947 The United States takes the lead in organizing the Rio Pact, a mutual defense treaty for the countries of the Western Hemisphere.

1954 The Organization of American States issues a "declaration of solidarity" in opposition to communist intervention in the Western Hemisphere.

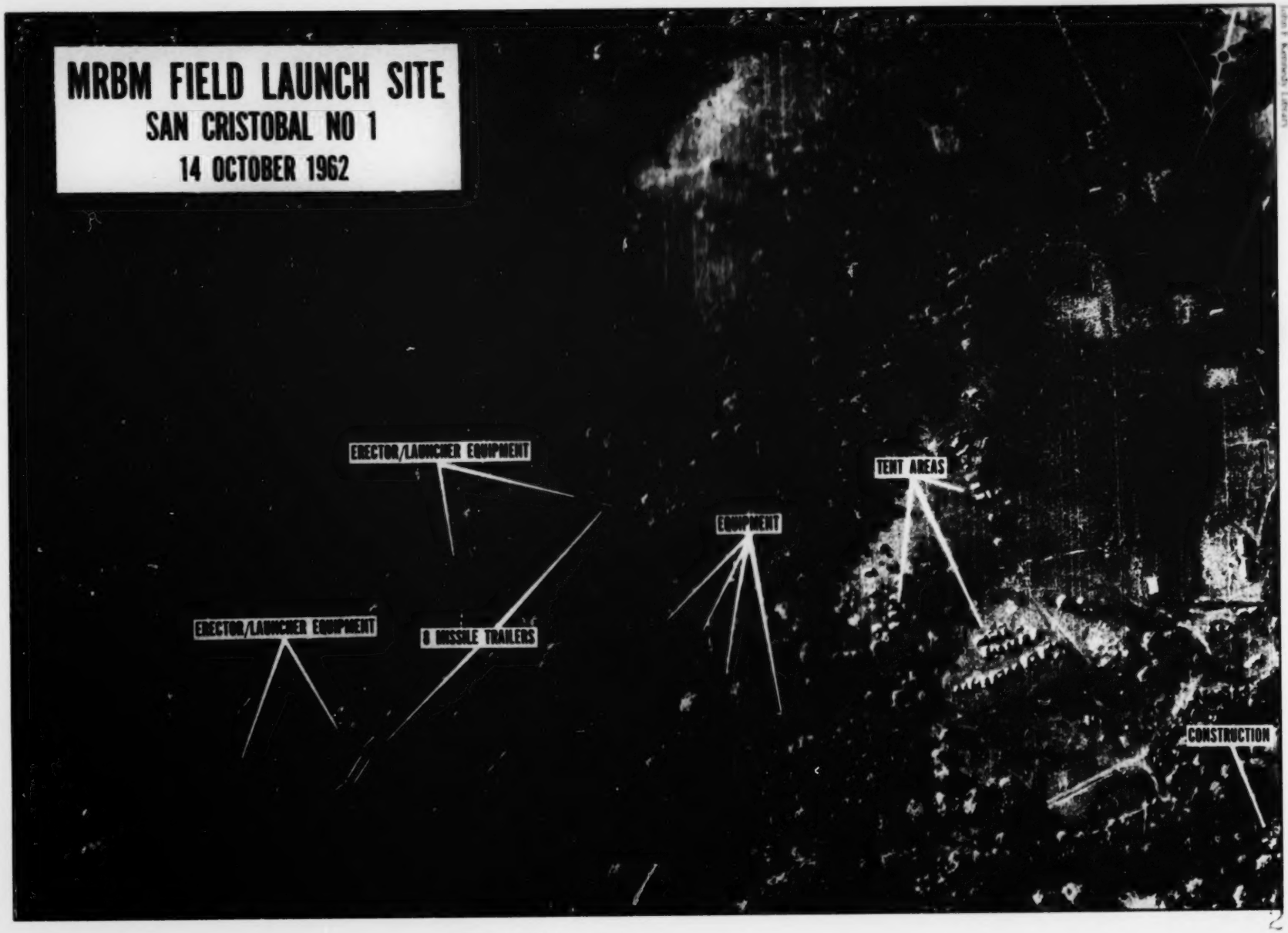
A secret U.S. operation succeeds in forcing Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz from power.

1958 The United States halts arms shipments to Cuba in response to the repressive measures of Batista.

1959 After coming to power in Cuba, Fidel Castro launches a land reform campaign that is seen as a threat to American-owned businesses.

1960 Castro establishes economic and military ties to the Soviet Union. The United States counters by barring imports of sugar from Cuba.

1961 Castro's forces defeat a U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs.



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Part II: The Cuban Missile Crisis — Thirteen Days on the Brink

On October 14, 1962, an American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft flew over the province of San Cristobal in Cuba on a routine mission to gather data. The pictures the aircraft took of the ground, however, disclosed developments that were far from routine. The photos revealed Soviet efforts to install approximately forty nuclear missiles, each capable of devastating an American city.

Since Cuban leader Fidel Castro's first appeals to Moscow in 1960, U.S. officials had repeatedly warned the Soviets against attempting to put missiles in Cuba. The Soviets had assured the United States that they had no intention of giving the Cubans nuclear missiles. They pledged that Cuba would receive only non-nuclear weapons to defend the island from attack.

Faced with evidence that nuclear missiles had indeed been sent to Cuba, U.S. leaders demanded that the Soviet Union immediately remove the missiles. The Soviets and the Cubans refused to comply, and war between the superpowers appeared imminent. The thirteen-day crisis that began when the reconnaissance photos were examined on October 15 was the most explosive confrontation of the Cold War. It is known to Americans as "the Cuban missile crisis," to Soviets as "the Caribbean crisis," and to Cubans as "the October crisis." At no other time in history was U.S. policy in the Caribbean and Central America so dangerously entangled with U.S.-Soviet relations.

Prelude to the Crisis

The failure of the U.S.-sponsored landing at the Bay of Pigs in 1961 convinced Fidel Castro that the United States would soon make another, more forceful, attempt to attack Cuba. Next time, he assumed, U.S. troops would lead the invasion. As a result, Castro believed that he needed to strengthen Cuba's defenses. To protect Cuba from the might of the United States, Castro felt he required the assistance of the other superpower, the Soviet Union. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev had already threatened to respond if the United States intervened in Cuba. After the Bay of Pigs, he backed up his commitment to Cuba by supplying the Cuban military with sophisticated weapons. Soviet officers and technicians also arrived to teach Cuban soldiers the tactics of modern warfare.

The United States denounced Cuba's alliance with the Soviet Union as an affront to the principles of both the Rio Pact and the Monroe Doctrine. President Kennedy developed a two-pronged approach to pressure the Castro regime. On the one hand, he sought to promote economic growth and democratic reform in Latin America to provide an attractive alternative to Castro's revolution. On the other hand, the United States led the campaign to expel Cuba from the Organization of American States and organized a corps of counter-insurgency specialists to help Latin American leaders fight communist guerrilla movements.

By early 1962, the tangled triangle of U.S.-Soviet-Cuban relations seemed to be pointing toward confrontation. Castro announced that he was a Marxist-Leninist and that Cuba was a communist state. To defend his revolutionary government against the United States, he relied on his Soviet allies to supply Cuba with arms. For their part, the Soviets readily built up Castro's arsenal. They hoped to use Cuba as a staging ground for extending their influence in the Western Hemisphere. Securing a strong communist Cuba located only ninety miles off the coast of Florida represented an important move for Moscow on the global chessboard. American policymakers saw the Soviet presence in Cuba as a threat to U.S. national security. Political pressure at home was mounting in 1962 for Kennedy to take action against Castro's revolution and the threat of communism in Latin America.

Facing page: *U.S. experts first learned of Soviet missile installations in Cuba by examining this reconnaissance photograph. The eight missile trailers indicated that the Soviets were working to place nuclear missiles capable of reaching the United States on the island.*

Behind the Soviet Gamble

When U.S. leaders discovered that the Soviets were installing nuclear missiles in Cuba, they were stunned. No one was sure of Khrushchev or Castro's intentions. Would the nuclear missiles be used to threaten Cuba's Latin American neighbors, or even intimidate the United States? Did the communist leaders believe that the United States would not oppose their plan? In October 1962, Americans did not know the answers to these questions.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, participants in the crisis from the United States, the former Soviet Union, and Cuba met on several occasions to review the events of 1962. Thanks to these discussions, we now know much more about the details of the Cuban missile crisis. In particular, a clearer picture has emerged of Khrushchev's motives for installing nuclear missiles in Cuba.

Balance of terror

Following the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Soviets shared Castro's conviction that the United States would use force to snuff out communism in Cuba. They believed that nuclear weapons would be a powerful deterrent to a U.S. invasion of the island.

At the same time, however, Khrushchev hoped to address the imbalance of nuclear forces between the superpowers. In 1962, the United States could claim a decisive edge over the Soviet Union both in sheer numbers of nuclear warheads (which contains the explosive device) and in the number of deliverable missiles. The U.S. nuclear arsenal consisted of three components: long-range missiles based on land, long-range bombers loaded with nuclear weapons, and submarine-launched missiles. In addition to nuclear forces based in the United States, more than 100 U.S. missiles in Turkey were capable of reaching the Soviet Union, as were shorter-range missiles stationed in other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)* countries.

In contrast, the Soviets' ability to strike U.S. territory was limited. In the late 1950s, Khrushchev boasted that the Soviets were on the verge of overtaking the United States in nuclear missile technology. Concern about a "missile gap" created anxiety in the United States. Many Americans feared the Soviets would take the lead in deploying long-range nuclear missiles, just as they had launched the first space satellite in 1957.

Under Presidents Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy, additional funding went toward strengthening the country's nuclear capability. Meanwhile, U.S. policymakers came to realize that many of Khrushchev's claims were exaggerated. By the time of the missile crisis, Soviet nuclear capability was still far behind U.S. capability. U.S. intelligence in 1962 estimated that the Soviets had 75 land-based missiles capable of reaching American soil, while the United States had 226 missiles that could reach the USSR. (Recent evidence has shown that the Soviets actually possessed only 20 missiles on their territory in October 1962.) Moreover, the Soviets had no submarine-launched missiles and were at a seven-to-one disadvantage in long-range bombers.

Khrushchev understood that the missiles in Cuba would significantly alter the nuclear imbalance. The missiles would be within striking distance of many major American cities, including the capital, and could reach key military bases in much of the Southeast. In addition, they could be used as bargaining chips to negotiate a withdrawal of U.S. nuclear forces from Turkey and other NATO countries, or as leverage to pressure the United States to abandon West Berlin. The next phase of Khrushchev's plans in Cuba called for the installation of intermediate-range missiles that could reach almost every corner of the United States.

In recent years, most U.S. officials and scholars close to the crisis have come to share the belief that correcting the nuclear imbalance was Khrushchev's primary motive for placing missiles in Cuba. According to Douglas Dillon, Kennedy's treasury secretary, the presence of forty missiles in Cuba "radically altered the numbers of deliverable warheads, and in that sense radically increased Soviet capability." The

*The United States played the leading role in forming the NATO military alliance in 1949 to defend non-communist countries in Europe against the Soviet Union.

Cuban-based missiles would have given the Soviets the ability to destroy approximately 40 percent of U.S. Strategic Air Command bases, thereby knocking out a key element of U.S. defenses.

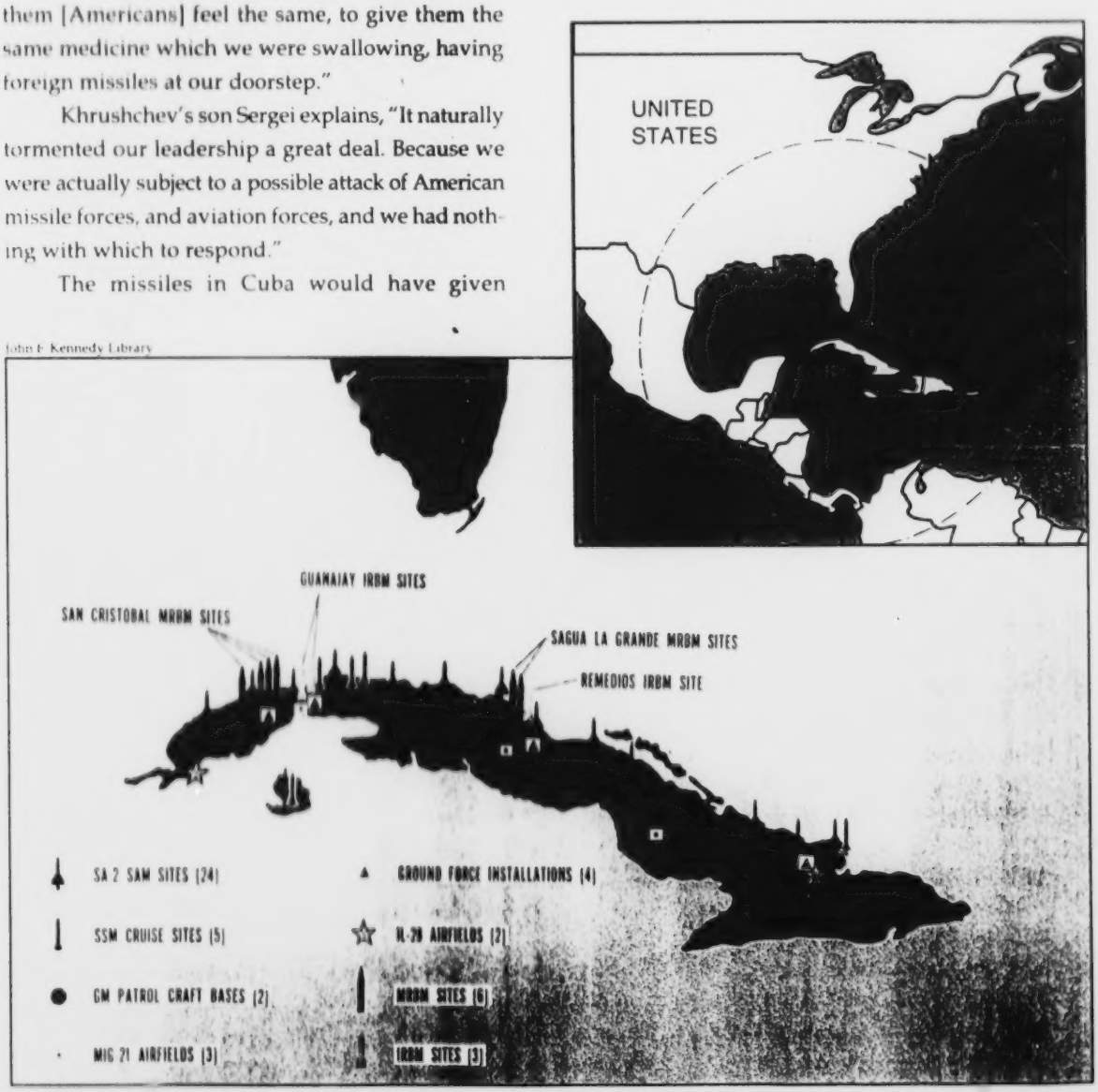
Former Soviet officials and scholars have confirmed that Khrushchev felt Soviet missiles in Cuba would serve as a response to the deployment of U.S. missiles in Turkey. According to Aleksandr Alekseyev, Soviet ambassador to Cuba during the crisis, "Khrushchev wanted very much to make them [Americans] feel the same, to give them the same medicine which we were swallowing, having foreign missiles at our doorstep."

Khrushchev's son Sergei explains, "It naturally tormented our leadership a great deal. Because we were actually subject to a possible attack of American missile forces, and aviation forces, and we had nothing with which to respond."

The missiles in Cuba would have given Khrushchev the response he was seeking. Alekseyev suggests that Khrushchev simply had not considered the possibility that the Americans would react as strongly as they did.

Castro's motives

While understanding Soviet motives in the crisis is crucial, the Cuban viewpoint is equally important. Castro knew that accepting Soviet missiles risked provoking a U.S. invasion or an air strike.



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***Above**: The Soviet military build-up in Cuba was concentrated on the northwestern shore of the island, ninety miles from the United States. **Above right**: The Soviet SS-4 missiles in Cuba had a range of over 1,000 miles, putting much of the southeastern United States within striking distance.*

Yet Castro unhesitatingly welcomed the missiles, not only because he thought they would deter a U.S. attack of Cuba, but also because he believed that they would strengthen the Soviet Union and other communist countries.

Jorge Risquet, a top Cuban official, explains, "We agreed on the installation of the missiles, noting, first of all, that this assured an improvement in the socialist camp's defense capabilities, and that if the socialist camp was prepared to run a risk on Cuba's behalf, then Cuba should also assume its share of the risks."

Ambassador Alekseyev recalls, "Fidel fell to thinking, and then said, 'If this will serve the socialist camp, and if it will hinder the actions of American imperialism on the continent, I believe that we will agree.'"

In Castro's mind, accepting the missiles was proof that Cuba was willing to position itself on the front line of the Cold War. Castro may have even been flattered by Khrushchev's offer to make Cuba the first communist country, other than the Soviet Union, in which Soviet nuclear missiles would be deployed.

U.S. Debates Response to Missiles

Theodore Sorensen, an adviser to Kennedy, remembers that the president and his inner circle simply did not know what Khrushchev's motives were: "The only honest answer I have is, 'I don't know now, and I didn't know then.' None of us knew. We could only speculate about what Khrushchev was up to."

Khrushchev's motives aside, the White House was shocked that the Soviets had ignored U.S. warnings against putting missiles in Cuba. President Kennedy was especially indignant at the secrecy surrounding the Soviet operation. Kennedy administration officials recognized that members of Congress and the American media would press for a strong U.S. response.

In the White House, there was little disagreement that nuclear missiles in Cuba would pose a grave threat to U.S. security. For the first time, American territory would be highly vulnerable to Soviet nuclear attack. From the U.S. perspective, the question was not whether the missiles should be removed, but how.

West Berlin and the Crisis

After the Allies defeated Nazi Germany in World War II, their armies remained in the country. The United States, Britain, and France occupied the western half of Germany, and the Soviet Union remained in the eastern section. Berlin, the capital, was divided among all four powers. With the onset of the Cold War, the Federal Republic of Germany (or West Germany) was formed out of western Germany, and the Soviet part became the German Democratic Republic (or East Germany). Berlin, which lay in the heart of East Germany, was also divided into two parts. The Soviets felt that the Western presence in West Berlin was a security threat. In 1948, they tried to drive the United States and its allies out of West Berlin by blockading the city. In response, the United States led a campaign to airlift 8,000 tons of food, fuel, medicine, and other supplies daily to the people of West Berlin. The blockade lasted almost a year before the Soviets backed down. Another crisis occurred in Berlin during August 1961, when the Soviets put up a wall between the two halves of the city to keep East Germans from fleeing to West Germany, where living standards were higher.

During the missile crisis, many U.S. policymakers feared that Berlin again would become a point of conflict. They thought that the Soviets might demand that the United States leave Berlin in exchange for removing their missiles from Cuba. Another possibility was that a U.S. attack on Cuba would be countered by a Soviet attack on West Berlin, all the more likely considering that Soviet forces already surrounded the city. Such a move could have resulted in nuclear conflict, since the United States had pledged to use nuclear weapons to defend West Germany and other NATO countries.

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The Soviets were found shipping bombers to Cuba three weeks before the missile crisis.

Initially, President Kennedy and his advisers decided to keep their knowledge of the missiles secret from the Soviets and the American public. On October 16, the president called together his closest and most trusted advisers to help him manage the crisis. This sixteen-member group was the Executive Committee of the National Security Council, or the "ExComm."

Doves, owls, and hawks

President Kennedy and the ExComm met to consider different ways to remove the Soviet missiles from Cuba, ranging from the purely diplomatic to a full-scale military assault. Over the next four days, the discussion produced three main choices for U.S. action:

1. Dovish — The United States could pursue purely diplomatic actions through the United Nations (UN) in order to pressure the Soviets to remove the missiles from Cuba. This would reduce the likelihood of military conflict. As a means of resolving the crisis, doves were willing to eliminate U.S. Jupiter missiles in Turkey in exchange for the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba. This process could take months, even years, and might be viewed internationally as a sign of U.S. weakness.

2. Owlish — The U.S. Navy could blockade Cuba. This action would prevent the arrival of Soviet ships carrying materials necessary to make the missiles operational. A naval blockade represented a combination of diplomatic and military responses. The United States would have demonstrated its willingness to fight if necessary, but there would still be room for a peaceful solution if the Soviets and Cubans were cooperative. A blockade, however, could have easily backfired. U.S. officials were concerned that a blockade would be seen as an act of war, spurring the Cubans and Soviets to declare war on the United States.

3. Hawkish — U.S. Air Force bombers could launch an air strike to destroy the missile sites immediately, preventing them from becoming operational. Such an action would risk a minimal number of American lives, but would be likely to kill Soviet and Cuban military personnel and Cuban civilians. Though the U.S. Air

Force was highly skilled, there was no guarantee that all of the missile sites would be destroyed in such a strike. Other hawks advocated a full-scale invasion of Cuba, counting on U.S. military superiority to carry the day. Such an invasion could accomplish the removal of both the missiles and Castro. However, this option would risk American lives and could have escalated into a nuclear conflict with the Soviet Union.

Doves and owls, including Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Under Secretary of State George Ball, disagreed. They feared that direct military confrontation with the Soviets would spiral, possibly accidentally, into nuclear war. Even if the Soviets had fewer missiles, they could still inflict enormous damage on the United States.

McNamara expressed concern: "If you go to nuclear war, and the other side retaliates, and only a few — maybe only one — bomb gets through to

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President Kennedy leads a session of the ExComm during the missile crisis.

Each of the three strategies had supporters within the ExComm, and each was carefully weighed by President Kennedy. Among the prominent hawks were Secretary of the Treasury Dillon, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maxwell Taylor.

These men felt that U.S. military superiority, even with missiles in Cuba, would see the United States through the crisis. An air strike or an invasion would scare the Soviets into backing down and, even if they fought back, the hawks expected the United States to prevail. Either way, according to Taylor, "We had 'em over a barrel."

destroy an American city, you — the one who just initiated the nuclear war — will have to shoulder the responsibility for the worst catastrophe in the history of this country."

On October 20, President Kennedy decided on a blockade — or quarantine — of Cuba by the U.S. Navy to prevent further shipments of military supplies to the island. This option allowed the president to steer a middle course between the ExComm's varied options. The quarantine did not commit the United States to an all-out war, and it avoided the international embarrassment of giving up the Jupiter missiles.

Kennedy addresses the nation

On the evening of October 22, Kennedy announced in a televised speech to the American public that the Soviets were installing nuclear missiles in Cuba. He then informed the nation of his decision to enforce a quarantine of Cuba until the missiles were removed. At the time, the president expected that the quarantine would be only the first step in a long war of nerves with the Soviets. In his speech, Kennedy warned that, "Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead, months in which both our patience and our will will be tested."

President Kennedy and his advisers were particularly concerned about the operational status of the missiles in Cuba. The original U-2 reconnaissance photos had shown that the missiles and their silos were not yet ready for use. Kennedy, however, was uncertain of the progress being made on the missile bases. As far as the president and his advisers were concerned, they were maneuvering in a minefield.

Kennedy's October 22 address caught the Soviet government off guard. For several hours, there was no response. Soviet diplomats in the United States were especially baffled. Like most Americans, they first learned of the Soviet missile build-up in Cuba through Kennedy's speech. In Moscow, Khrushchev's first reaction was anger. On October 23, he blasted the quarantine of Cuba by the United States as a violation of international law. Khrushchev maintained that the missiles in Cuba, regardless of their type, were meant "exclusively for defensive purposes, in order to secure the Cuban republic from an aggressor's attack." He also warned the United States that military aggression toward Cuba might lead to nuclear war.

The U.S. government moved quickly to gain international backing for the quarantine. The U.S. ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson, denounced the introduction of missiles in Cuba. He charged that Castro "aided and abetted an invasion of the hemisphere," making himself "an accomplice in the communist enterprise of world domination." Stevenson called for a UN vote to condemn the installation of Soviet missiles in Cuba, but the Soviet ambassador to the UN vetoed Stevenson's proposal.

The Organization of American States (OAS), on the other hand, did vote twenty to zero in support of the U.S. quarantine, condemned the Soviet Union as an aggressor, and branded Cuba as a threat to security in the hemisphere. The secret manner in which the missiles were placed in Cuba infuriated Latin American governments. Many Latin American leaders also feared Cuban support of communist guerrilla movements in their own countries.

On the Brink

As the crisis intensified, many Americans feared that war, possibly nuclear war, was probable. The U.S. naval quarantine went into effect October 24. Initially, Khrushchev ordered Soviet ships to race toward the quarantine line. The Soviets threatened to sink any U.S. vessel that tried to prevent their passage to Cuba. That same day, U.S. nuclear forces were placed on DEFCON 2 alert for the first and only time in history: bombers remained airborne, and missile silo covers were opened in preparation for launching. On October 25, at least a dozen Soviet ships en route to Cuba turned back, but preparations at the missile sites on the island accelerated. Soviets and Cubans started working around the clock to make the missiles operational.

War seemed even more likely when Soviet forces shot down a U.S. reconnaissance flight over Cuba on October 27, killing the pilot, Major Rudolf Anderson. The day before, Castro had ordered Cuban air defense forces to fire on any U.S. aircraft that flew within range. Meanwhile, the ExComm received reports that the missiles in Cuba were about to become operational.

The tension was reaching a breaking point. If the Soviets refused to back down, the United States would be faced with the options of allowing the missiles to remain in Cuba, launching an air strike, or invading the island. To make matters more difficult, there was no assurance that the Soviets exercised complete control over the missile sites, as Khrushchev claimed. No one in Washington knew for sure if nuclear warheads had reached Cuba, but U.S. leaders had no choice but to assume that they

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A U.S. reconnaissance pilot flew below 1,000 feet on October 23 to capture this view of a tent covering a Soviet missile.

Soviet rocket launchers, missile transporters, short-range Frog *missiles, and tanks were discovered at a military camp near Remedios, Cuba, on October 25.*

were on the island. With these pressures bearing down on the ExComm, the possibility of removing U.S. Jupiter missiles from Turkey in exchange for the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba was reconsidered. But even supporters of such a plan recognized that it should not be seen as a public trade.

Exchange of Letters

Two letters written by Khrushchev to Kennedy marked a new stage in the crisis. The first letter, received October 26, was an emotional appeal apparently composed by Khrushchev himself, calling on Kennedy to avoid the catastrophe of nuclear war. Khrushchev indicated that the Soviet Union would take its missiles out of Cuba in return for a U.S. pledge not to invade the island.

On October 27, a second letter arrived signed by Khrushchev. This letter took a much more hardline position, insisting that the United States remove its nuclear missiles from Turkey in return for a withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba. Kennedy found the demands contained in the second letter unacceptable for two reasons. First, Turkey was not willing to have the Jupiter missiles removed. Second, such an exchange would leave NATO's southern flank vulnerable. Turkey and other U.S. allies on the Mediterranean counted on U.S. medium-range nuclear missiles to deter an attack by the Soviet Union. With the world watching, Kennedy did not want to appear weak in the confrontation of superpowers.

After hours of analyzing and discussing the two letters, Kennedy and his advisers decided to respond only to the first letter and to ignore the second one. On the evening of October 27, the president offered to "give assurances against the invasion of Cuba" and to "remove promptly" the quarantine measures that were in effect. In return, Kennedy expected the Soviet missiles to be removed from Cuba under international observation and supervision. Kennedy also demanded safeguards to ensure that such weapons would not be placed in Cuba again.

That same evening, President Kennedy sent his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, to meet with Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin. In his memoirs, Robert Kennedy recalled what he told Dobrynin:

> "We had to have a commitment by tomorrow that those bases would be removed. I was not giving them an ultimatum but a statement of fact. He should understand that if they did not remove those bases, we would remove them. President Kennedy had great respect for the Ambassador's country and the courage of its people. Perhaps his country might find it necessary to take retaliatory action; but before that was over, there would not only be dead Americans but dead Russians as well. Time was running out. We had only a few more hours — we needed an answer immediately from the Soviet Union. I said we must have it the next day."

DEFCON

DEFCON, or Defense Condition, refers to the U.S. state of readiness for nuclear war. The DEFCON scale runs from five, for peace-time conditions, to zero, for a nuclear attack. On October 24, 1962, the Strategic Air Command was placed on DEFCON 2 for the first and only time in history. Below is a summary of DEFCON 2 measures.

1. Battle staffs were placed on twenty-four hour alert.
2. All military personnel were forbidden to go on leave.
3. One hundred and eighty-three bombers were dispatched to thirty-three airfields.
4. One-eighth of all U.S. B-52 bombers were constantly airborne.
5. Additional bombers were placed on alert on runways throughout the United States.
6. Ninety U.S. nuclear missiles were placed at a heightened state of readiness.

During the course of his meeting, Robert Kennedy warned Ambassador Dobrynin that events were spiraling out of control. Unless the Soviets agreed to remove the missiles, Kennedy stated, the president would order U.S. forces to destroy them. Robert Kennedy also revealed that the U.S. missiles in Turkey were outmoded and that the United States had already made plans before the crisis to remove them. However, he advised Dobrynin that if the Soviets tried to present the withdrawal as a missile trade, the United States would deny that any such agreement existed.

Waiting for Moscow's Answer

Neither the president nor his advisers were confident that Khrushchev would accept the final American offer. U.S. preparations for an air strike against the missile sites and an invasion of Cuba intensified. Over 100,000 battle-ready troops had massed in Florida to await the president's orders.

No one was sure what Khrushchev's reaction would be to a U.S. invasion of Cuba. Would Khrushchev retaliate against U.S. forces in West Berlin, or Turkey? If Soviets were killed in Cuba, would the USSR strike at NATO troops in Europe? Worse yet, if some of the missiles in Cuba were ready for launch, would they be fired at invading U.S. troops or targets in the United States? Members of the ExComm pondered the dangers facing their country after their meeting at 9 p.m. on the night of Saturday, October 27.

President Kennedy had just read Barbara Tuchman's *The Guns of August*, which described how the leaders of Europe miscalculated their way into World War I in 1914. The president did not want this

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The construction of permanent buildings to serve as troop barracks indicated Soviet plans to maintain a long-term presence at this missile site.

crisis to become the subject of a future book about how superpower miscalculations led to World War III. According to his brother Robert, President Kennedy wanted to be sure that, "If anybody is around to write after this, they are going to understand that we made every effort to find peace and every effort to give our adversary room to move. I am not going to push the Russians an inch beyond what is necessary."

Secretary of Defense McNamara recalls similar concerns. "The possibility of blundering into disaster preoccupied me during the missile crisis....What the missile crisis impressed upon me was that, yes, we could stumble into a nuclear war; and that such an event, however 'limited,' was totally unacceptable, and thus that it must be avoided."

On the other hand, not all of Kennedy's advisers felt this way. Secretary of the Treasury Dillon stated after the crisis, "I didn't understand then, and I don't understand now, why people worried so much about one limited, conventional action leading to nuclear war. The idea is preposterous!"

On October 27, Khrushchev received President Kennedy's letter and Ambassador Dobrynin's report of his meeting with Robert Kennedy. In addition, he received a cable from Castro. The Cuban leader expressed his belief that the United States would invade his island in the coming days and called on Khrushchev to launch nuclear missiles at the United States in response to the expected attack.

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President Kennedy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara

Khrushchev was faced with a difficult decision. Should the Soviet leader refuse the U.S. offer, risk military confrontation, and a possible invasion of Cuba? Should he stick to his proposed swap of Turkish missiles for Cuban missiles, and hope that the United States would give in? Or should he accept Kennedy's offer?

Jupiter Missiles

At the time of the missile crisis, the Soviet Union had many more troops and non-nuclear weapons in Europe than the United States and its NATO allies. The United States, however, had a greater nuclear capacity and depended on nuclear weapons to deter the Soviets from attacking U.S. allies. U.S. Jupiter missiles had been installed in Turkey to protect the southern European members of NATO. By 1962, these missiles were outmoded and vulnerable to Soviet attack. As a result, the United States had developed the Polaris submarine, which carried nuclear missiles on board. Travelling deep underwater, the submarine was very difficult to destroy. President Kennedy made plans in 1961 to add a Polaris submarine to the U.S. Mediterranean fleet, and had scheduled the removal of the old Jupiter missiles. In October 1962, however, the Polaris was not yet ready.

Had the president traded the Jupiters before the Polaris arrived, the U.S. nuclear deterrent would have been weakened. In addition, America's NATO allies, as well as the Soviets, might have doubted the sincerity of the U.S. pledge to use nuclear weapons to defend its allies. The NATO alliance would have been severely damaged if the United States were seen as willing to sacrifice the security of its allies to protect itself in a regional crisis.

The next day, Premier Khrushchev backed down. Radio Moscow announced that the Soviet Union was ordering the dismantling and removal of the missiles in exchange for U.S. guarantees of Cuban sovereignty. Khrushchev's statement on Radio Moscow, directed to President Kennedy, said: "The Soviet government, in addition to earlier instructions on the discontinuance of further work on construction sites, has given a new order to dismantle the weapons, which you describe as offensive, and to crate them and return them to the Soviet Union."

The Cuban missile crisis, which had brought the superpowers to the brink of war, possibly nuclear war, was over.

Cuba's Reaction

Castro was enraged by Khrushchev's decision. News of the deal between the Soviets and the Americans reached him by radio. He had not been consulted because Moscow believed that he would not endorse the U.S.-Soviet agreement.

Once the missile crisis had burst into public view, Castro had pushed for a five-part agreement that would have ended the quarantine, and also would have guaranteed Cuba against U.S. attack, limited the activities of anti-Castro Cuban exiles living in Miami, returned the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo to Cuba, and ended the ongoing U.S. economic blockade of Cuba.

While Moscow, Washington, and the rest of the world breathed easier after October 28, Castro kept Cuba on a war footing. He had already ordered the mobilization of 270,000 Cuban soldiers on October 22 in anticipation of a U.S. invasion. Castro was convinced that the United States would not honor its pledge to live at peace with Cuba. He had believed all along that the Soviet missiles were needed to deter U.S. intervention and defend the Cuban revolution.

In the weeks following the resolution of the missile crisis, Soviet diplomats pressed Castro to accept

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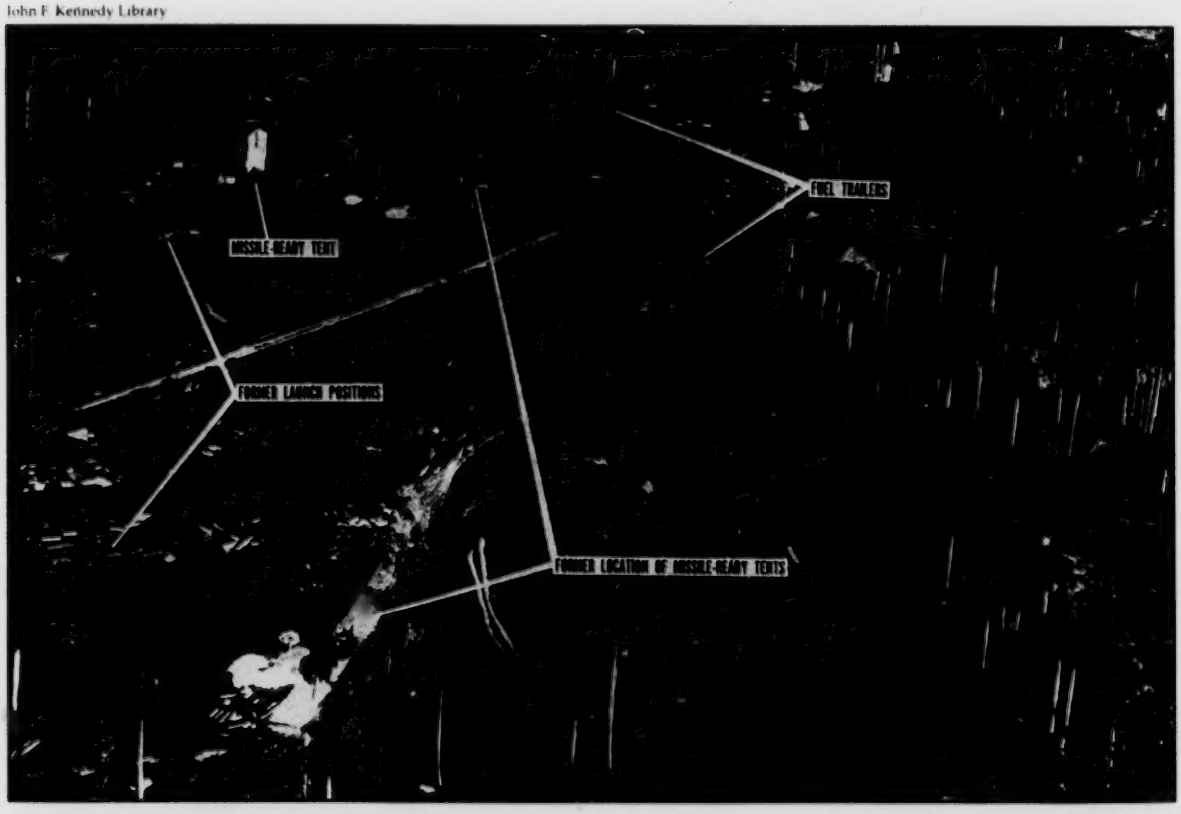

Reconnaissance photos confirmed that the Soviets moved quickly to dismantle their missile bases in Cuba after October 28.

the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement. Castro, however, would not permit U.S. specialists to come to Cuba to verify the removal of the missiles, and he accused the Soviets of abandoning Cuba in the face of U.S. aggression. Verification had to take place in international waters. The Soviet-Cuban talks dragged on until November 19 before Castro reluctantly gave his assent to other aspects of the agreement. Adding to the pressure felt by the Cuban leader, the United States continued its naval blockade and daily reconnaissance flights during the negotiations.

In the end, Castro saw the arrangement that resolved the missile crisis as a threat to Cuba's security. Khrushchev had not only agreed to withdraw the missiles, but also to remove a squadron of Soviet bombers from the island.

Top Cuban official Jorge Risquet explains his country's perspective: "We believe that besides having salvaged world peace and having prevented nuclear war, we should also have salvaged peace for Cuba, a peace that included a halt to the economic blockade, turning over the naval base at Guantanamo, and an end to all attacks on Cuba."

Changes in Superpower Relations

Throughout the Cuban missile crisis, the fear of nuclear war hung over the heads of both U.S. and Soviet leaders. President Kennedy said he believed that there was a 30 to 50 percent chance that the missile crisis would lead to a nuclear war.

Evidence disclosed since 1992 suggests that Kennedy's fears were justified. According to the head of operational planning for the Soviet General Staff in 1962, General Anatoliy Gribkov, nuclear warheads had indeed reached Cuba in the weeks before the missile crisis erupted in the international arena. The Soviet warheads (as many as 162 of them) were designed to be delivered by short-range, tactical nuclear missiles. The most powerful tactical missiles on the island were capable of striking targets up to 100 miles away. Although the U.S. mainland was beyond the range of the missiles, they could have been used against American troops invading Cuba with devastating results. Before the outbreak of the crisis, Gribkov said, the missiles could have been launched by the Soviet commander in Cuba without authorization from Moscow.

In order to avoid a nuclear exchange, Khrushchev turned his back on his Cuban ally and came to terms with his Cold War rival. By doing so, the Soviet leader risked not only his ties with Cuba but also his country's reputation as a global superpower.

After the missile crisis, a hotline was established to ease communication between U.S. and Soviet leaders in times of crisis. The arrangement featured teletype machines installed in both the

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During the missile crisis, Kennedy and Khrushchev drew on the personal relationship they had developed while meeting in Vienna in June 1961.

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A U.S. destroyer inspects a Soviet ship transporting a missile from Cuba to the USSR.

Kremlin and the White House. The hotline was reportedly used dozens of times. The risk of a misunderstanding resulting in deadly conflict was reduced.

The missile crisis also impressed on the minds of Kennedy and Khrushchev the dangers of making nuclear threats against each other. Having come so close to the unthinkable horror of a nuclear war, leaders on both sides recognized the need to embark on a new path to prevent nuclear confrontation in the future.

Georgiy Shakhnazarov, an aide to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, states: "I am convinced that if there had been no Caribbean crisis, the danger of nuclear war in the subsequent years would have been incomparably greater. Nuclear weapons might have been used in Vietnam and in other cases."

In a speech the year after the Cuban missile crisis, President Kennedy reflected similar concerns about avoiding nuclear confrontation:

"If we cannot now end our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity. For, in the final analysis, our most basic common link is the fact that we all inhabit this planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal....Confident and unafraid, we labor on — not toward a strategy of annihilation, but toward a strategy of peace."

Part III: Three Decades of the Tangled Triangle

Americans greeted the resolution of the Cuban missile crisis with a sigh of relief. The United States had stood up to communism, war had been avoided, and there was even the possibility of better relations with the Soviet Union. Looking toward the future, Americans felt confident that their country remained unrivaled as the strongest nation in the world.

There seemed to be few limits to American power in the early 1960s. U.S. forces waged the Cold War throughout the globe: delving deeper into Vietnam, staring down the Soviets in Europe, and maintaining vigilance in the Caribbean and Central America.

Exporting the Cuban Revolution

Throughout the world, the early 1960s brought great changes. The break-up of European colonial empires that had begun after World War II was redrawing the global political map. Poor, often unstable, countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were struggling with the challenges of independence and economic development. The term "Third World" emerged to contrast these developing states with the "First World" of industrialized Western democracies and the "Second World" of communist countries led by the USSR.

Under Fidel Castro, Cuba moved to the forefront of the Third World. Castro held up Cuba's communist system as a model for other developing countries, claiming that Cuba was on the path to offering its citizens a decent standard of living and equal opportunity. Cuba also won admiration for defying the United States.

Castro sought to take advantage of Cuba's growing stature by encouraging revolutions in other nations, especially in Latin America. Castro's bold foreign policy, however, clashed with U.S. efforts to contain communism. If anything, the Cuban missile crisis had aggravated the hostility between the United States and Cuba.

The United States continued a strict economic embargo against Cuba and worked to isolate the Castro government in the international arena. For its part, Cuba quickened the pace of its own revolution and loudly condemned what Castro viewed as U.S. imperialism. For much of the 1960s, the struggle between the United States and Cuba captured world attention.

Guevara's crusade

Castro's most famous ally in promoting the Cuban revolution was Ernesto Ché Guevara, a doctor from Argentina. Guevara had witnessed the overthrow of the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954, an event that convinced him that democratic reform in Latin America faced insurmountable obstacles. In 1956, Guevara joined forces with Castro. After the revolution, he was appointed as Cuba's minister of industry. Guevara organized a highly centralized economy that gave him enormous decision-making power. But Guevara was first and foremost an impatient revolutionary, not an economist. He believed that Cuba should strive to produce workers dedicated to the ideals of the revolution rather than emphasize economic efficiency. Despite Guevara's hopes, Cuba's economic performance during the 1960s suffered from the mismanagement and incompetence of the central authorities.

In the spring of 1965, Ché mysteriously disappeared. Rumors placed him fighting with rebel troops in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Two years later, a letter from Guevara announced that he was in Bolivia trying to ignite a revolutionary struggle. Ché targeted the United States as his ultimate enemy and called on the peoples of Latin America to follow the example of North Vietnam in fighting against the United States. Guevara's call to arms, however, sparked little response among the poor peasants of Bolivia. In October 1967, Ché himself was tracked down and killed by Bolivian soldiers with the help of U.S. advisers.

Guevara's death marked an end to Cuba's most revolutionary phase. Cuba's aggressive foreign policy had strained its relationship with the Soviet Union. From the perspective of the Soviets, Castro

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was still an upstart. Moscow had been supporting communist parties for years in Latin America and favored a slower, more calculated approach to laying the groundwork for a communist revolution. The Soviets warned Castro to follow their lead, and cut back Cuba's oil shipments in 1967 to make their point.

Alliance for Progress

The United States had its own reasons to be upset at Castro. Besides turning Guevara loose to instigate revolution in Bolivia, Castro had also shipped arms to guerrillas seeking to overthrow democratic governments in Venezuela and Costa Rica. As far as the United States was concerned, Castro's actions were aimed directly at undermining a new U.S. program, the Alliance for Progress, to bolster democracy and social reform in Latin America. Initiated by President Kennedy in 1961, the program called for the United States to provide $20 billion over ten years to fund plans for economic development in the region. Likewise, the Peace Corps was created to allow thousands of young Americans to participate in projects designed to improve everyday life in Latin America and other developing areas.

Prensa Latina

Ernesto Ché Guevara.

The Rebellion that Failed

Ernesto Ché Guevara began his revolutionary mission in Bolivia in November 1966 with less than fifty other rebels under his command. Ché's group camped in the jungle, emerging only to ambush Bolivian soldiers and steal their weapons. At first these surprise attacks were successful, and word of Guevara's rebellion spread. News of the communist rebels eventually reached Washington. Sensing a threat, the United States stepped in to train the Bolivian army to track down the rebels. Bolivia's neighbors also came to fear Ché's uprising and began to seal their borders. Despite his fame, Ché received little support either from local peasants or the communist movement. The Soviet Union and the Bolivian Communist Party believed that South America was not ready for a communist revolution. Even Castro limited his contact with Guevara to avoid offending Moscow.

Without help from abroad, waging a guerrilla war in the jungles of Bolivia became very difficult. Ché's men spent most of their time fighting to survive. Medical supplies and food were scarce. Guevara's followers were forced to eat cats and anteaters. In August 1967, one-third of the group was killed in a surprise attack by the Bolivian army. Ché also lost followers to illness, desertion, drowning, and starvation. With the help of local peasants, the U.S.-trained Bolivian army captured Ché on October 8, 1967. The next day the rebel leader was executed by government troops and his body put on display for journalists. Even in death, however, Guevara was not forgotten. Many Latin Americans were inspired by Ché's revolutionary ideals. In Cuba, his commitment to self-sacrifice and his struggle in the Bolivian jungle are often recalled today as the country faces hard times.

Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.
—John Kennedy

Kennedy believed that these programs offered the best hope for positive change in Latin America. At the same time, Kennedy beefed up the U.S. military response to the Cuban threat. An elite counter-insurgency corps, known as the Green Berets, was formed to help governments in Latin America and other Third World regions defeat communist rebels. Military units throughout the hemisphere were modernized to combat well-organized guerrilla movements while police forces were trained to control urban riots and sabotage.

The counter-insurgency effort was designed to further the cause of democracy and development. However, the ongoing conflict between the United States and the Soviet-Cuban alliance made security and stability the top U.S. priorities. In the Caribbean, President Lyndon B. Johnson sent 23,000 U.S. troops to the Dominican Republic in 1965 to make sure that supporters of Castro did not gain control of the Dominican government. In Central America, the United States often found itself on the side of leaders who violated democratic principles.

U.S. support for the Somoza family in Nicaragua,

Historical Association of Southern Florida

Anti-communist Cuban exiles receive military training.

Library of Congress

A Peace Corps volunteer (sitting) and local workers take a break from building a road in 1962.

for example, tarnished America's reputation. The Somozas held power for more than four decades largely through election fraud and the Nicaraguan National Guard. In the aftermath of an earthquake that devastated Nicaragua in 1972, President Anastasio Somoza profited from the millions of dollars of relief aid that poured into the country. Troops from his National Guard resold relief supplies, and funds for reconstruction were paid to firms owned by the Somoza family. The corruption connected with the earthquake relief effort served to strengthen opposition to Somoza's rule in Nicaragua. Many threw their support to the Sandinistas, a guerrilla movement named after Augusto César Sandino. In 1979, the Sandinistas overthrew Somoza and soon allied their country with Cuba.

El Salvador, another long-time U.S. ally, also suffered from increasing violence in the 1970s. Election results in 1972 were overturned by the military-dominated government. The victorious candidate, José Napoleón Duarte, was arrested by police, jailed for a number of days, and then flown out of the country. Opposition parties refused to participate in elections later in the 1970s, and by 1977 a deadly civil war between the government and leftist guerrillas had begun. The United States aided the Salvadoran military, while Cuba and the Soviet

Union supplied arms to the guerrillas. Even Duarte's election in 1984 did little to halt violence that claimed more than 60,000 lives.

The Soviet-Cuban Alliance

By the end of the 1960s, many of the early hopes of the Cuban revolution had worn off. Other countries in Latin America did not follow Cuba's example. The United States maintained an economic embargo against Cuba, and the revolution's radical economic experiments led to confusion and shortages.

Moreover, the Soviets strongly pressured Cuba to give up efforts to export revolution. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 showed that Moscow was capable of punishing communist countries that did not closely follow the Soviet Union. Castro understood that Cuba could not afford to lose Soviet aid. His response was to strengthen Cuba's ties with the Soviet Union. He signed trade agreements in 1972 that firmly linked the two countries economically. Cuba also loyally supported the Soviet position in the UN and other international forums.

By the middle of the 1970s, Cuba had received billions of dollars in aid from Moscow. Soviet oil shipments shielded Cuba from the energy price hikes that began in 1973. Castro's economy grew at an impressive pace. At the same time, Cuba and the Soviet Union worked together to promote communism in the Third World.

Cuba's role in Africa

In 1975, the Soviets airlifted Cuban troops to the African country of Angola to support a pro-Soviet political movement. At that time, Angola was emerging as an independent nation after defeating Portuguese colonial rulers. Three groups were fighting for power. Cuban forces helped the communist faction gain control of the capital and extend its authority over much of the country.

Cuba's involvement in Angola gave Castro a position of leadership in the Third World. In his view, the Cuban army was fighting on behalf of peoples oppressed by colonialism, just as the Cubans had been oppressed by Spain. The communists in Angola, however, were unable to win a decisive military victory over their opponents. The civil war dragged on and Cuba's presence proved costly. More than 10,000 Cubans died in the fighting. Only in 1989 did Cuban troops begin to leave, after a

Historical Association of Southern Florida

A billboard in Cuba illustrates the warm relations during the 1970s between Fidel Castro (right) and Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. The message hails the Cuban-Soviet alliance as "a true example of fraternal relations."

Castro and Human Rights

After coming to power, Fidel Castro imprisoned thousands of Cubans for political reasons. Like many of those imprisoned in the early 1960s, Jorge Valls was jailed before Castro's revolution for actively opposing the rule of Fulgencio Batista. Valls was imprisoned under Castro's regime in 1964 after continuing the struggle for democratic rights in his country. Below is an excerpt from Valls' account of the more than twenty years he spent in Castro's prisons:

We lined up again for water. This was always extremely scarce and was administered by the chief of the galley. It was generally four cups apiece, and that was what we had to drink, bathe, and perhaps wash some underwear. We tried hard to use as little clothing as we could, a pair of shorts or a pair of cut-off trousers....We tried not to get too near each other, but it was inevitable. We would go for lunch and dinner in the collective dining room, one galley at a time....It was better not to look at your plate because it might come with small grubs, worms or cockroaches. We were too hungry to be squeamish. If someone found a cockroach or other unusual object floating in his dinner, he would say, "This is protein," and either eat it or throw it away....

We, the prisoners, were not defeated in spirit, and in many ways we represented a threat to the regime. We were the most politically conscious sector of the population. There were so many of us that every family in Cuba had some kind of connection to someone in prison. We included dissident revolutionary leaders from every faction. Our numbers grew by the thousands, and soon the population of political prisoners, more than any battalion or political party, was the intellectual and political equivalent of the country's capital. That made us very dangerous.

negotiated settlement was reached involving the United States, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and South Africa. The Soviets and Cubans worked together elsewhere in Africa as well, particularly to bolster a communist regime in Ethiopia during its 1978 war with neighboring Somalia.

Carter stresses human rights

While Cubans were fighting for communism in Africa in the late 1970s, President Jimmy Carter was reshaping U.S. foreign policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. The new President's emphasis on human rights drew fire from many leaders in the region. In 1977, for example, Guatemala rejected U.S. military aid when Carter demanded an end to the army's repression of political opponents. Somoza responded to similar charges against Nicaragua by hiring two American lawyers to justify his regime's human rights policies.

Carter also negotiated a treaty to turn the Panama Canal over to Panama by the year 2000. After weeks of fierce debate, the Senate ratified the agreement. In the process, however, opponents of the treaty latched onto the issue as a symbol of everything that was wrong with U.S. foreign policy.

Reagan Battles Communism

Events during the 1970s suggested to many Americans that the international strength and prestige of the Soviet Union was rising at the expense of the United States. U.S. policy in Vietnam had clearly failed by the middle of the decade, revolutions overthrew U.S. allies in Iran and Nicaragua in 1979, and the Soviets invaded Afghanistan that same year.

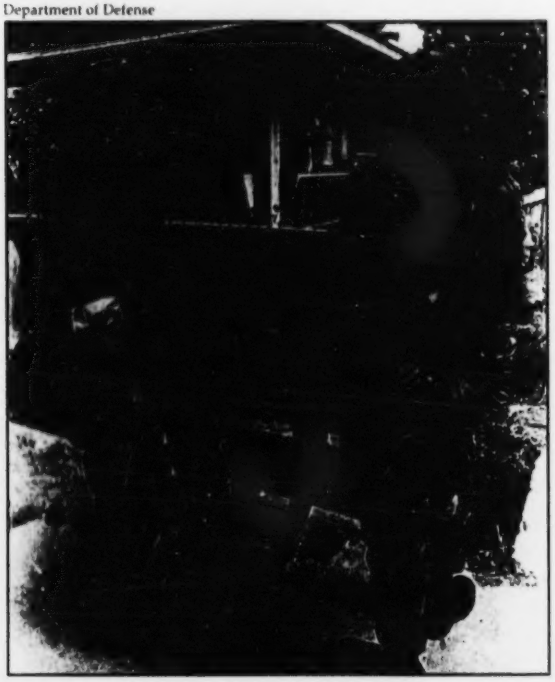
The election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 marked a new direction for the United States in the world. President Reagan placed anti-communism at the heart of his foreign policy. He labeled the Soviet Union the "evil empire" and saw Cuba as the source of revolutionary aggression in Central America and the Caribbean. Reagan also pledged to put a stop to communist expansion in the region, thus setting the stage for a clash with Castro.

The first conflict came in Grenada, a small island nation in the Caribbean that had undergone a revolution in 1979. Cuba provided substantial aid and technical support to the new regime. Cuban and Soviet involvement drew the attention of the United States, especially after construction began on an airplane runway that could potentially serve Soviet

Library of Congress

Merchant ships pass through the Panama Canal.

Department of Defense



U.S. Marines on patrol in Grenada after the U.S. invasion of the island.

bombers. U.S. concern was raised further when a group of extremists murdered the prime minister and took control of the government. Reagan responded in October 1983 by sending an invasion force of 2,000 soldiers. The troops easily overcame local resistance, but fought with Cuban construction workers in the process.

The Reagan administration also struck at Cuban interests in Central America. Cuba's close ally, the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, became the target of a U.S. economic embargo in 1985. At the same time, the United States increased support for the *contra* guerrilla forces fighting to overthrow Nicaragua's Sandinista regime. U.S. efforts were meant in part to counter Cuba's substantial investment in the Sandinistas. During the 1980s, Cuba not only provided $130 million in aid to Nicaragua but also sent thousands of non-military advisers. A similar situation existed in El Salvador. The United States

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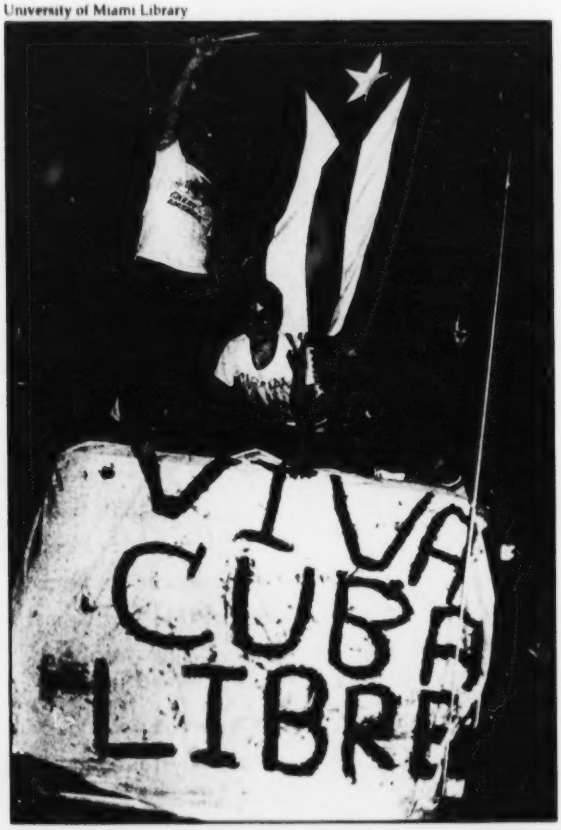

Cuban-American boys support Cubans seeking to emigrate to the United States in 1979. Their banner says, "Long Live Free Cuba."

supplied more than $1 billion in military aid during the 1980s to strengthen the government, while Cuba trained more than 1,000 Salvadoran guerrillas to fight for revolution.

> *The national security of all the Americas is at stake in Central America.*
> *—Ronald Reagan*

Castro in retreat

At the close of the 1980s, the contest between the United States and Cuba clearly favored Washington. Cuban allies in Grenada had been swept away, and the guerrilla movement in El Salvador had failed to advance. The election of Violeta Chamorro to the presidency of Nicaragua in 1990 replaced the Sandinistas with a government friendly to the United States. Meanwhile, the Cuban-American community of more than 1 million people, centered in South Florida, was becoming more aggressive in

Department of Defense

U.S. paratroopers march near the Panama Canal.

Department of Defense

A U.S. Air Force sergeant gives Honduran troops a lesson in artillery.

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its efforts to force Castro out of power.

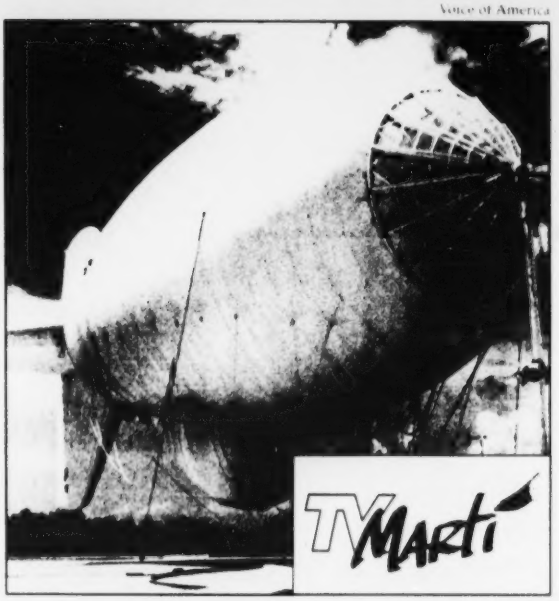
The United States also showed its resolve to protect U.S. interests by invading Panama in 1989 to bring down the dictatorship of Manuel Noriega. Noriega had refused to recognize the results of democratic elections in his country, and had developed ties with Cuba. After surrendering to U.S. authorities, Noriega was convicted and imprisoned in the United States on drug trafficking charges.

On balance, the Reagan administration's anti-communist offensive in the region had reasserted U.S. strength, leaving Castro in a lonely position. Critics, however, argued that Reagan exaggerated the communist threat in the Caribbean and Central America, and contributed to the cycle of violence and poverty in the region.

Economic troubles

For the people of the Caribbean and Central America, the 1980s were difficult times as well. The dramatic economic growth that took place in much of the region from World War II through the 1970s

Voice of America



A blimp beams TV Martí's signal

TV and Radio Martí

In 1985, the United States opened a radio station to broadcast news, music, and commentary to Cuba. The station was named Radio Martí in honor of José Martí, a Cuban patriot of the 19th century. President Reagan and Cuban exiles hoped that the radio station would educate Cubans about life in the United States and undermine support for Fidel Castro. Initially, Castro saw Radio Martí as a threat to his government, and tried unsuccessfully to jam its broadcasts. He also began sending Cuban radio signals over U.S. airwaves. In addition, Castro cancelled a new immigration agreement with the United States that would have allowed 20,000 Cubans to emigrate to the United States each year. After two years, however, Castro concluded that Radio Martí posed little threat to his regime. The Cuban leader renewed the immigration agreement and stopped the radio broadcasts to the United States.

In 1990, the United States launched a more ambitious effort — TV Martí — in hopes of giving Cubans an alternative source of information. Originally, the programming included *Kate and Allie*, *ALF*, and *The Cosby Show*. TV Martí, however, soon began placing more emphasis on current events and politics. In addition to daily news broadcasts, TV Martí's programming schedule now features documentaries about the experiences of former political prisoners imprisoned under Castro and a talk show highlighting the accomplishments of Cuban exiles in the United States. Cuba has responded to TV Martí by jamming the signals coming from the United States. Among Americans, TV Martí has been a controversial subject. On the one hand, opponents argue that Castro spends only $1,000 to block every $1 million worth of U.S. transmissions. They also note that TV Martí airs only between 3:30 a.m. and 6 a.m. Others, however, point out that the broadcasts are seen by as many as 50,000 Cubans and represent an important challenge to Castro's rigid control of the Cuban media.

(From Cuba's *Granma*)

came to a halt during the decade. The finances of the region were first jolted by the rise in oil prices. Meanwhile, prices for local commodities, such as coffee, bananas, cotton and sugar, lagged behind.

By the early 1980s, almost every country in the Caribbean and Central America found itself burdened by enormous debts to banks in the United States, Europe, and Japan. Adding to the strain was the steady increase in population. From 1965 to 1985, the total number of people doubled and the average age fell below twenty years. Cities swelled with hundreds of thousands of new residents looking for work.

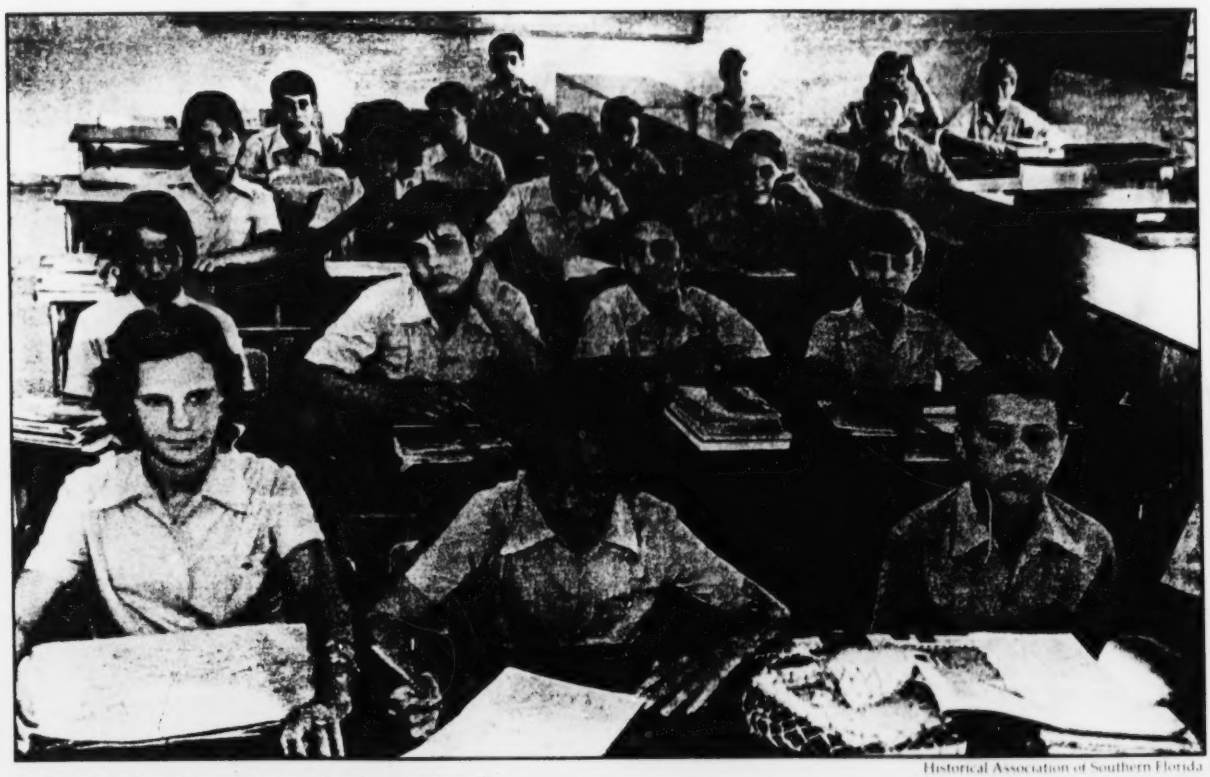
President Reagan hoped that free trade would boost the economic fortunes and political stability of the Caribbean and Central America. In 1983, he announced the Caribbean Basin Initiative, a program that eliminated tariffs on exports from the region. American business interests, however, lobbied Congress to ensure that many of the region's most competitive exports, such as sugar, beef, and textiles, were not included among the tariff-free goods.

Historical Association of Southern Florida

The image of Ché Guevara dominates apartments built under Castro.

End of the Cold War Marks New Era

While Reagan battled communism in the Caribbean and Central America, the Soviet Union under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev took a new look at its Cold War policies. Gorbachev came to power in 1985. He was at the forefront of a new generation



Historical Association of Southern Florida

Cuba has placed a strong emphasis on education.

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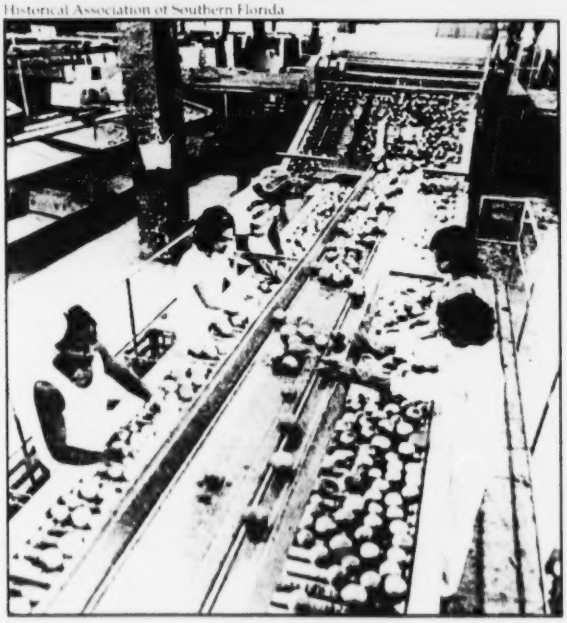
of Soviet leaders who recognized that their country's economy was faltering.

While focusing on reforms at home, Gorbachev largely gave up the Cold War competition against the United States. Soviet involvement in Asia and Africa was reduced, and in 1989 Moscow's satellites in Eastern Europe* were allowed to break away from Soviet control.

Historical Association of Southern Florida



Cuban workers process citrus fruits, one of Cuba's main exports.

As the Cold War wound down, Cuba stood out as a stumbling block to better U.S.-Soviet relations. Gorbachev conceded that his country needed Western technology to modernize the Soviet economy, but U.S. leaders insisted that the Soviets first withdraw their military personnel from Cuba and cut aid to the Castro regime. Although Gorbachev resisted U.S. pressure to trade away his country's alliance with Cuba, worsening economic problems forced him to reduce Soviet support for Castro's government.

The collapse of Soviet power was a heavy blow to Cuba. During the 1980s, more than two-thirds of Cuba's trade was with the Soviet Union. The Cubans relied on the Soviets for oil and grain, while exporting mostly sugar, nickel, and citrus fruits. Soviet trade subsidies supplied the Cubans with at least $3 billion in annual assistance, amounting to approximately one-quarter of Moscow's total foreign aid

*Soviet bloc satellites had close military and economic ties to the USSR. In Eastern Europe following World War II, the Soviets established communist governments that were obedient to Moscow in East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.

Ché Guevara's Grandson — El Roquero*

Commandante Ernesto Ché Guevara's oldest grandchild had already turned seventeen when I met him in late 1991. A six-foot-tall teenager, Canek Sanchez Guevara wore his hair down to his shoulders, had a silver earring hanging from his left earlobe, and four colored leather bracelets on his left hand. Like thousands of Cuban youths milling about on Havana's Malecón boulevard, he wore faded, fashionably ripped jeans, white sneakers and a T-shirt. The grandson of Cuba's most venerated martyr didn't want to be a Marxist revolutionary. He wanted to be a heavy-metal rock musician.

To the dismay of his mother Hilda, the oldest of Ché Guevara's five children, Canek composed his songs in English. His bedroom walls were covered with posters of American and British rock stars, taken from Western magazines brought to him by foreign visitors. On the little free space left on these walls, he had written the names of his favorite bands: Slayer, Death, Kreator. Canek was a *roquero*, a rocker....

What could somebody like him do in Cuba? Canek asked rhetorically. Nothing. He was studying at a graphic design high school, but he described his studies as a "waste of time."

"There's no paper, no pens, and no interest on the part of the teachers to do anything. And if you graduate, there's no work in your field. They'll ask you to go to the countryside and work in agriculture. This place is hopeless."

**Excerpted from* Castro's Final Hour, *copyright © 1992 by Andres Oppenheimer. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster, Inc.*

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spending. Castro was also stung by the fall of communist leaders in Eastern Europe. These regimes were important economic and military allies for Cuba after Castro came to power. As Cuba's trade links with the former Soviet bloc unraveled, Cuban imports fell by more than 75 percent. Oil imports dropped by more than half, leaving much of Cuba's agricultural machinery without fuel.

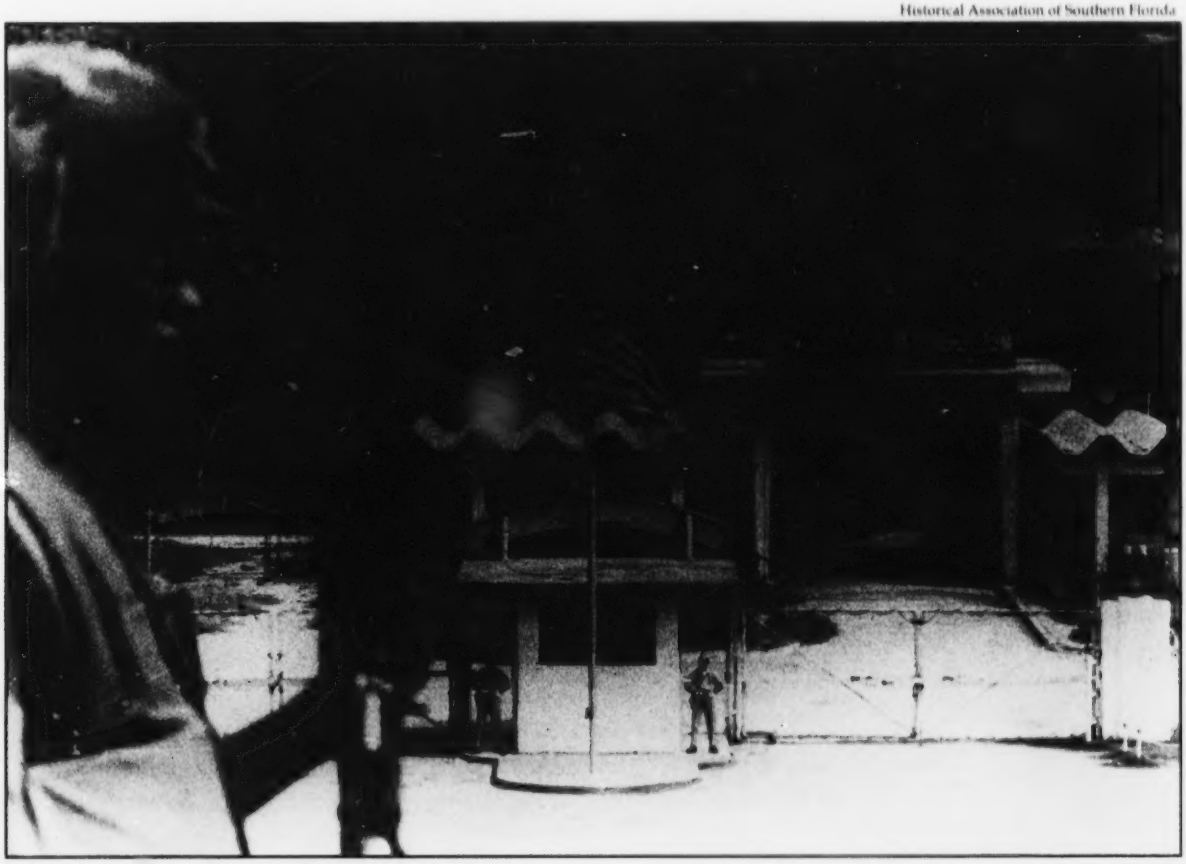
Castro's last stand

By the time the Soviet Union officially came to an end in December 1991, Castro had already enacted a strategy for holding onto power. Unlike Gorbachev, Castro clamped down on signs of political opposition at home and tightened his grip on the national economy. He announced a state of economic emergency. All food was rationed. "Rapid-action brigades" were unleashed to stamp out dissent. One million bicycles were imported from China to provide an alternative to the fuel-starved public transportation system. Castro pledged to die fighting in defense of the Cuban revolution, and even warned his people to prepare for a U.S. assault on the island.

Meanwhile, Castro scrambled to find new trading partners. Shipments of sugar to China were increased, and a meningitis vaccine was traded for Brazilian oil. New beach resorts and nightclubs were opened to attract foreign tourists. In 1995, barriers to foreign investment were lowered, given foreigners the right to fully own businesses in Cuba.

Cuba also reached an accord with the new government of Russia to exchange Cuban sugar for Russian oil. In addition, the two countries agreed to continue operating what had been a Soviet-run electronic surveillance station in northwestern Cuba. The station had been at the center of Soviet intelligence-gathering efforts in the Western Hemisphere.

Historical Association of Southern Florida



U.S. soldiers stand guard at the border separating the naval base at Guantanamo from the rest of Cuba. Castro s government has demanded that the United States give up the base.

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What is life for us without the fatherland, without the revolution, without socialism?
—Fidel Castro

Publicly, the Cold War between Castro and the United States has remained frozen in time. Under the Cuban Democracy Act in 1992, Congress tightened the economic embargo against Castro's government by penalizing foreign subsidiaries of American firms that trade with Cuba. Meanwhile, Castro has angrily rejected U.S. calls for free elections and democratic reforms in Cuba.

The United States has paid a diplomatic and economic price for its hard line toward Cuba. In 1994, more than 100 countries in the UN voted to condemn the U.S. embargo against Cuba. At the same time, the embargo has prevented U.S. companies from taking advantage of trade and investment opportunities in Cuba. Canadian, Mexican, and European firms have filled the void.

On other fronts, however, there have been signs of a thaw in U.S.-Cuban relations. In 1994, the two countries reached an agreement to stop an exodus of refugees from Cuba to the United States. The crisis had begun after Castro lifted restrictions on emigration, prompting tens of thousands of Cubans to head toward Florida on flimsy vessels or even inner tubes. For the first time since Cuba's revolution, the United States denied the Cubans automatic admission. Instead, the administration of President Bill Clinton opened negotiations with Cuban officials — something U.S. leaders had long avoided. In the accord signed in September 1994, the United States pledged to accept 20,000 Cuban immigrants annually in exchange for Cuba's commitment to block illegal immigration. In 1995, Clinton permitted greater contact between Cuba and U.S. journalists, students, and Cuban-Americans.

The international spotlight dims

The end of the Cold War has recast the U.S. foreign policy agenda not just in Cuba, but throughout the Caribbean and Central America. Countries that figured prominently in the international spotlight in the 1980s — El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala — have slipped into the shadows in the 1990s.

The lack of interest in the Caribbean and Central America is due in part to the region's progress toward peace. Without economic and military assistance from the United States and the Soviet Union, the civil wars of the region have died down.

In El Salvador, where the U.S.-backed government had battled guerrillas supported by the Soviet Union during the 1980s, the UN helped negotiate a peace agreement at the end of 1991. The government pledged to remove several high-ranking officers from the army and permit the rebels of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) to participate freely in elections. In exchange, the rebel forces promised to give up their weapons. In national elections in 1994, political parties representing the government and the former guerrillas finished first and second respectively.

Although the peace process has run into roadblocks, both sides lack the strength to continue fighting. The FMLN retains a solid base of support in the countryside, but has lost the backing of the Soviet Union and Cuba. Likewise, the government has seen assistance from the United States fall sharply. From 1980 to 1991, the United States provided El Salvador $6 billion in

Jeff MacNelly in the *Chicago Tribune*. Reprinted by permission: Tribune Media Services.

military and economic aid. In contrast, U.S. aid in 1995 totaled $69 million.

Events in Nicaragua have moved in the direction of peace as well. After Violeta Chamorro won the presidency from the Sandinistas in 1990, she sought to heal the divisions that had resulted from the civil war in the 1980s. Chamorro allowed the Sandinistas to retain control of the army. She also took a slow approach to addressing the claims of landowners who had lost property under the Sandinistas.

President Chamorro has been criticized by U.S. conservatives for being too soft on the Sandinistas. They have proposed holding up U.S. aid to Nicaragua to make their point. Within Nicaragua, presidential elections in 1996 are expected to feature a three-way contest among conservatives, Sandinistas, and a former top official in the Chamorro government.

Guatemala has been home to Central America's bloodiest civil war, but even there the level of violence has dropped off. In 1995, UN-sponsored talks produced preliminary accords on human rights issues. The conflict in Guatemala has particularly deep roots. The country is divided not only between rich and poor, but between the descendents of Mayan Indians and Spanish speakers who have long dominated the economy.

Redefining security

In addition to furthering the cause of peace, the end of the Cold War has also changed the definition of U.S. security in the Caribbean and Central America. U.S. officials today are less likely to worry about the spread of communism in the region than about refugee crises, drug trafficking, spiraling population growth, and the destruction of the rain forest.

Recent developments in Haiti illustrate the shift of U.S. concerns in the Caribbean and Central America. In September 1994, 20,000 American troops went ashore in Haiti to spearhead an international mission to restore democratic government on the island. Although the operation was aimed at reversing a military coup against Haiti's democratically elected president, pressure for U.S. action was largely driven by a wave of Haitian "boat people" seeking refuge in the United States.

The forces of political instability and desperate poverty that produced the Haitian refugee crisis are linked to other problems as well. Most governments in the region lack the resources to protect the natural environment. Many are also unable, or unwilling, to prevent their countries from serving as shipment points in the international drug trade.

Long-term prospects for advancement in the Caribbean and Central America are mixed. Only Costa Rica has a solid tradition of peaceful democracy in Central America. Elsewhere, the office of president is held by elected leaders in every country, but in reality power often lies in the hands of army generals, not civilian presidents.

The economic future is likewise marked by uncertainty. Most countries of the region continue to rely on traditional export crops, such as coffee, bananas, and sugar. The United States, which has been a partner in roughly two-thirds of the region's foreign trade for most of this century, has shown reluctance to deepen trade ties with the Caribbean and Central America. Meanwhile, newer industries have been hobbled by limited markets, misguided economic planning, and widespread corruption. However, there are reasons for optimism. Many countries of the region are experiencing strong economic growth, often fueled by increasing trade. Progress toward peace and stability has laid the foundation for a rise in investment.

Conclusion

In the coming days, you will have an opportunity to consider a range of alternatives for U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. Each of the three viewpoints, or options, that you will explore is based on a distinct set of values and beliefs. Each takes a different perspective on our country's role in the world and the challenges facing the Caribbean and Central America. You should think of the options as a tool designed to help you better understand the contrasting strategies from which Americans must craft future policy. At the end of this unit, you will be asked to make your own choices about where U.S. policy should be heading.

U.S. Involvement in the Caribbean and Central America

1962 The United States thwarts Soviet attempts to install nuclear missiles in Cuba.

1963 With U.S. support, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras form the Central American Defense Council.

1965 President Lyndon B. Johnson sends 23,000 U.S. troops to the Dominican Republic to combat an attempted overthrow of the pro-U.S. government.

1967 Ernesto Ché Guevara is captured and executed by U.S.-trained Bolivian troops. Guevara's guerrilla army had failed to provoke Cuban-style revolutions in other countries of Latin America.

1970 The Soviet Union stops construction of a submarine base in Cuba after protests from the United States.

1975 Thousands of Cuban troops intervene in Angola to help establish a pro-Soviet regime.

1977 Guatemala rejects U.S. military aid after President Jimmy Carter links the aid to demands for an improvement in Guatemala's human rights record.

1978 The U.S. Senate ratifies a treaty that turns over the Panama Canal to Panama at the end of the century.

1979 The United States condemns the existence of a brigade of Soviet combat troops in Cuba. The resulting controversy helps undermine an arms control agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Cuba applauds the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and sends 2,500 health and education specialists, as well as military advisers, to aid the new government.

1980 More than 125,000 Cubans flee to Florida by sea in the "Mariel exodus."

1981 Under President Ronald Reagan, the United States resumes arms sales to Guatemala, sends military advisers to El Salvador, and ends economic assistance to Nicaragua.

1983 Reagan announces the Caribbean Basin Initiative, designed to boost economic development in the region.

U.S. troops invade the Caribbean island nation of Grenada to remove its pro-Soviet government. Among the casualties are twenty-four Cuban construction workers killed in clashes with U.S. soldiers.

1984 The United States and Cuba sign an immigration agreement which results in the return to Cuba of nearly 3,000 refugees from the Mariel exodus. The United States had charged that Cuban leader Fidel Castro encouraged criminals and asylum patients to join the outpouring.

1985 The United States begins broadcasting Radio Martí to Cuba. TV Martí goes on the air five years later.

Reagan declares an economic embargo against Nicaragua and increases support for *contra* forces fighting against the Sandinistas.

1986 Castro puts an end to experiments with economic liberalization in Cuba and increasingly criticizes Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's attempts at reform in the Soviet Union.

1987 Costa Rican President Oscar Arias initiates peace negotiations among five Central American countries. As part of the agreement, Nicaragua's Sandinista government pledges to hold free elections.

1989 Democratic movements in Eastern Europe remove many of Cuba's chief trading partners and military allies from power.

Cuban troops begin to return home from duty in Angola after a peace agreement between the United States, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and South Africa. The last Cubans leave in 1991.

The United States invades Panama to bring down the government of dictator Manuel Noriega. During the conflict, U.S. troops break into the residence of the Cuban ambassador to Panama.

1990 A candidate friendly to the United States, Violeta Chamorro, wins the presidency of Nicaragua in a free election.

1991 The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, which oversaw trade relations among the countries of the Soviet bloc since 1949, is dissolved. Cuba had been a member since 1972.

A military coup in coup in Haiti overthrows the country's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and prompts thousands of Haitians to seek refuge in the United States.

Three months before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev announces that the Soviet Union's 11,000 military personnel in Cuba will be withdrawn from the island.

Representatives of the government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) sign an agreement to end the civil war in El Salvador.

1992 Congress enacts the Cuban Democracy Act to tighten the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba.

1994 Political parties representing the government and the FMLN poll the largest number of votes in elections in El Salvador.

The United States and Cuba sign an agreement to stop an outpouring of Cuban refugees from the island and regulate the flow of immigrants from Cuba to the United States.

Twenty thousand U.S. troops lead an international effort to restore Haiti's democratic government.

1995 Representatives of the Guatemalan government and rebel forces sign a preliminary agreement toward ending Guatemala's civil war.

Options in Brief

Option 1 — Keep Up Our Guard

The security threats facing our country have changed since the end of the Cold War. Unfortunately, they have not gone away. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed the chief menace to U.S. interests in the Caribbean and Central America, but the region remains a potential minefield of dangers. The United States cannot afford to relax. Our country's security demands that we play an active, assertive role in the Caribbean and Central America. The United States must serve as a force for order and stability in the region. The United States is expected to act firmly and decisively to eliminate threats in our own back yard. Americans have to recognize that the Caribbean and the Central America are our first line of national defense. We must take a strong stand.

Option 2 — Extend a Helping Hand

With the Soviet Union no more, the United States has a unique opportunity to direct its energy in the Caribbean and Central America to the cause of economic development and human rights. We cannot hide from the problems that affect our neighbors, but neither should we concentrate solely on the negative. Together, the United States and the countries of the Caribbean and Central America should cooperate to build a more prosperous, democratic region. Improving the lives of people in the Caribbean and Central America will not be cheap, but in the long run a policy of U.S. aid, trade, and investment will pay off. The United States should prepare for the future rather than look backward toward the Cold War.

Option 3 — Recognize Our Limitations

For forty years, the Cold War warped our perspective on the U.S. role in the world. In the Caribbean and Central America, small, local conflicts were viewed as grave threats to U.S. interests. As a result, we poured billions of dollars into the region to protect our national security and create democracy. By most accounts, our money was wasted. With the Cold War over, we should now move quickly to reduce our involvement in the Caribbean and Central America, normalize relations with Cuba, and encourage the countries of the region to solve their own problems. The United States has no reason to continue its long history of meddling in the internal affairs of Caribbean and Central American countries. The Cold War crusade is over.

Option 1

Keep Up Our Guard

The security threats facing our country have changed since the end of the Cold War. Unfortunately, they have not gone away. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed the chief menace to U.S. interests in the Caribbean and Central America, but the region remains a potential minefield of dangers. From refugee crises to drug trafficking to AIDS, the Caribbean and Central America is a breeding ground of problems. Meanwhile, Fidel Castro continues to be a thorn in our country's side. The United States cannot afford to relax. Our country's security demands that we play an active, assertive role in the Caribbean and Central America.

The United States must serve as a force for order and stability in the region. The world understands that the United States is responsible for policing the Caribbean and Central America. With the Soviet Union out of the picture, the region is no longer a flashpoint in the old superpower conflict. Rather, the United States is expected to act firmly and decisively to eliminate threats in our own back yard. Regional tyrants who defy our standards for responsible, democratic government should not be tolerated. Castro's regime deserves special attention. Maintaining pressure on the Cuban dictator will prevent him from provoking future refugee crises or stirring up political mischief in the Caribbean and Central America. Elsewhere in the region, we must be ready to quickly take action against potential dangers. Those seeking to follow in the footsteps of Haiti's military thugs and Panama's Manuel Noriega must not be allowed to terrorize their peoples and upset regional stability. Americans have to recognize that the Caribbean and the Central America are our first line of national defense. We must take a strong stand.

What policies should we pursue?

- Take military action, if necessary, to defeat coups against democratic governments in the Caribbean and Central America.
- Respond forcefully to a resurgence of anti-American forces in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and elsewhere in the region.
- Provide our allies in the Caribbean and Central America the military and economic aid necessary to defend themselves against rebel forces.
- Strictly enforce the U.S. economic embargo against Fidel Castro's regime.
- Pressure other countries to limit their ties with Cuba, especially in the areas of trade, investment, and tourism.
- Automatically return "boat people" from the Caribbean to their countries of origin and tighten border control efforts to reduce illegal immigration from Central America.

Lessons from history

While all Americans desire peace, history teaches us that peace cannot be achieved through weakness and isolationism. In the 1970s, for example, we reached out to the Soviet Union in the spirit of compromise, and the Soviets spurned our goodwill by invading Afghanistan in 1979. Likewise, the United States hoped to build a friendly relationship with Saddam Hussein in the 1980s. The Iraqi dictator responded by sending his army into Kuwait in 1990. The anti-American tyrants of the Caribbean and Central America, especially Fidel Castro, have shown no interest in compromise. For the past three decades, they have fueled violence in the region and threatened U.S. interests. As we learned from our Cold War victory, steadfast commitment to principle ultimately pays off.

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PROS

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. Promoting stability in the Caribbean and Central America will lay the groundwork for increased trade, economic development, and successful democracy in the region.

2. A principled, consistent U.S. stance in the Caribbean and Central America serves to bolster the forces for order and stability in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and other unstable countries.

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3. Maintaining pressure on Castro will prevent him from stirring up trouble in other countries in the Caribbean and Central America.

4. Taking a firm stand in the Caribbean and Central America will enable the United States to better control the flow of refugees and illegal drugs into our country.

CONS

OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. An aggressive policy in the Caribbean and Central America increases the likelihood of our country becoming involved in a war.

2. Pressuring Cuba gives Castro an excuse to blame the United States for his country's problems and crack down on any signs of opposition.

3. Meddling in the affairs of Caribbean and Central American countries will only deepen anti-American resentment in the region and contribute to further instability.

4. Tightening the economic embargo against Cuba damages our international image and cuts off American businesses from economic opportunities on the island.

Option 2

Extend a Helping Hand

With the Soviet Union no more, the United States has a unique opportunity to direct its energy in the Caribbean and Central America to the cause of economic development and human rights. During the Cold War, the United States looked upon the region as a battleground in its conflict with the Soviet Union. Fidel Castro's Cuba became our chief concern. Today, we must refocus our attention on the challenges and opportunities of the Caribbean and Central America. We cannot hide from the problems that affect our neighbors, but neither should we concentrate solely on the negative.

Together, the United States and the countries of the Caribbean and Central America should cooperate to build a more prosperous, democratic region. The U.S. role is critical. Governments that pursue free-market economic policies, respect human rights, and control military spending should be rewarded with our help. Trade should be increased to forge new relationships and break the cycle of poverty and conflict that has held back the region. Improving the lives of people in the Caribbean and Central America will not be cheap, but in the long run a policy of U.S. aid, trade, and investment will pay off. Without our support, governments in the region will be reluctant to take the politically risky measures necessary for economic reform and democratic progress. The tottering regime of Fidel Castro should not distract us from our larger purpose. The emergence of a new Cuba — without Castro — is coming soon. The United States should prepare for the future rather than look backward toward the Cold War. The world is changing too rapidly for the United States to remain stuck in the past.

What policies should we pursue?

- Reward Caribbean and Central American nations that pursue democratic principles and free-market economic reform with economic aid and trade benefits.

- Gradually establish a free-trade zone that would include all of the democratic, free-market countries of North America.

- Deny economic aid and ban the sale of weapons to countries of the Caribbean and Central America that do not promote free-market principles and protect human rights.

- Offer to establish normal economic and diplomatic relations with Cuba in exchange for a decision by Castro to hold free elections and open the Cuban economy.

- Provide economic incentives to countries of the Caribbean and Central America that reduce military spending.

Lessons from history

Recent history has shown that free-market democracy is the surest road to improving the lives of people everywhere. After World War II, the nations of Western Europe and Japan were rebuilt on a foundation of free-market economics and democratic institutions. These countries now represent some of our closest allies and most important trading partners. The nations of the Third World that have risen above poverty in the last few decades — such as South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Chile — have likewise embraced free-market principles. They are now making sure-footed strides toward democracy as well. Unfortunately, these lessons have not been applied to the Caribbean and Central America. For decades, the short-term demands of the Cold War were placed ahead of the long-term need to promote economic and political development in the region.

PROS SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. By invigorating the economies of the Caribbean and Central America, the United States will create new opportunities for U.S. trade and investment in the region.

2. Economic development and greater respect for human rights in the Caribbean and Central America will reduce the flow of refugees from the region to the United States.

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3. Improved economic conditions in the Caribbean and Central America will undercut the appeal of anti-American forces in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and elsewhere.

4. Promoting free trade and economic development in the Caribbean and Central America will compel Castro either to reform Cuba or to face increasing pressure from his own people.

CONS OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. Spending billions of dollars in foreign aid at a time when our own government is deep in debt will hurt the U.S. economy.

2. Offering to restore relations with Cuba will ease the pressure on Castro's government and allow the communists to hold onto power.

3. Pouring money into the Caribbean and Central America will make the countries of the region more dependent on foreign aid, fuel government corruption, and do little to promote economic development.

4. Using foreign aid and trade as a substitute for a strong U.S. military presence in the Caribbean and Central America will endanger our country's security in the region.

Option 3

Recognize Our Limitations

For forty years, the Cold War warped our perspective on the U.S. role in the world. Wars in faraway countries, such as Vietnam, took on exaggerated importance. In the Caribbean and Central America, small, local conflicts were viewed as grave threats to U.S. interests. As a result, we poured billions of dollars into the region to protect our national security and create democracy. By most accounts, our money was wasted. The people of the region still live very poorly, while democracy has failed to take root in most countries. At the same time, more than three decades of U.S. hostility toward Cuba have produced a bitter stalemate and hurt American business.

With the Cold War over, we should now move quickly to reduce our involvement in the Caribbean and Central America, normalize relations with Cuba, and encourage the countries of the region to solve their own problems. The United States has no reason to continue its long history of meddling in the internal affairs of Caribbean and Central American countries. In military and strategic terms, the importance of the Caribbean and Central America has decreased. Economically, the poor countries of the region account for a meager proportion of American investment and trade. Meanwhile, the United States is grappling with problems here at home that were neglected during the Cold War. Our history of intervention in the Caribbean and Central America should give way to the growing involvement of international organizations, such as the United Nations and the Organization of American States. The Cold War crusade is over.

What policies should we pursue?

- End military aid to the countries of the Caribbean and Central America.
- Reduce economic aid to the countries of the Caribbean and Central America.
- Re-establish normal economic and diplomatic relations with Cuba.
- Promote the establishment of a regional organization to focus on drug trafficking, refugee crises, and other problems of the Caribbean and Central America.
- Encourage the United Nations, the Organization of American States, and other international organizations to play a greater role in settling conflicts in the Caribbean and Central America.

Lessons from history

The U.S. experience in the Caribbean and Central America has taught us that our foreign aid and expertise cannot serve as the building blocks of a prosperous, democratic society. Again and again in this century, we have tried and failed to remake the countries of the Caribbean and Central America in our image. In El Salvador, Nicaragua, and elsewhere in the region, U.S. involvement has done little to overcome centuries of poverty, conflict, and social injustice. Our efforts to implant American values in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War likewise went down to defeat. History has shown us that the democracy and freedom Americans uphold cannot be exported like computers and automobiles.

PROS

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS

1. Reducing U.S. involvement in the Caribbean and Central America will help ease anti-American feelings in the region, and will remove the Cuban issue as a sore point in U.S. relations with other countries.

2. Cutting back foreign aid to the Caribbean and Central America will save the United States hundreds of millions of dollars at a time when our own government is deep in debt.

&

3. With the normalization of U.S.-Cuban relations, Cubans will recognize that the source of their problems is the Castro regime, not the United States.

4. Just as the increased flow of information eroded support for communism in the Soviet bloc in the 1980s, greater contact between the United States and Cuba will generate momentum for political and economic reform among Cubans.

CONS

OPPOSING ARGUMENTS

1. Easing U.S. pressure against Castro will be viewed as a sign of weakness by other dangerous tyrants, such as Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

2. Reducing U.S. aid to the Caribbean and Central America will worsen poverty in the region and lead to greater instability.

3. Turning our back on the Caribbean and Central America will reduce U.S. influence in a part of the world that is a natural market for American goods and home to several young, promising democracies.

4. Without a strong presence in the Caribbean and Central America, the United States will be unable to control the flow of refugees and illegal drugs from the region into our country.

Supplementary Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis

Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to Prime Minister Castro, October 22, 1962

Dear Comrade Castro:

The Soviet Government has just received from the President of the U.S. the following document [referring to President Kennedy's televised speech to the nation on October 22, 1962, about the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba]. We send you a copy.

We consider this declaration of the government of the United States and Kennedy's speech of October 22 to be an exceptional intervention in the affairs of the Republic of Cuba, a violation of the norms of international law and of the fundamental rules that govern relations between states and a blatant act of provocation against the Soviet Union. The Republic of Cuba has the same rights as any other sovereign state to defend its country and to choose its allies according to its wishes. We reject the Northamerican government's shameless demands to control the shipment of weapons to Cuba and its aspirations to determine the type of weapons that the Republic of Cuba may possess. The U.S. government knows perfectly well that no sovereign state would allow interference in its relations with other states and that it would not present accounts on measures taken to strengthen the defense of its country.

Responding to Kennedy's speech, the Soviet Government has issued a statement in which it expresses the most determined protest against the piratical actions of the Northamerican government and qualifies these actions as perfidious and aggressive against sovereign states, stating its decision to fight actively against such actions.

We have instructed our representative on the Security Council to present urgently the question of violation, by the U.S., of the norms of international law and the Charter of the United Nations Organization and to emit a determined protest against the aggressive and perfidious actions of Northamerican imperialism.

Because of the situation that has arisen we have instructed the Soviet military representatives stationed in Cuba on the need to take the necessary measures and to be at full readiness.

We are sure that the actions undertaken by the Northamerican imperialists in trying to take away the legitimate right of the Republic of Cuba to strengthen its defensive capacity and to defend the motherland will provoke the angry protest of all peace-loving peoples and will provoke the mobilization of great masses to defend the just cause of Revolutionary Cuba.

We send you, comrade Castro, and all your comrades in arms, our warm greetings and express our firm certainty that the aggressive plans of Northamerican imperialism will suffer defeat.

N. Khrushchev

U.S. Proclamation on Interdiction of Offensive Weapons, October 23, 1962

WHEREAS the peace of the world and the security of the United States and of all American States are endangered by reason of the establishment by the Sino-Soviet powers of an offensive military capability in Cuba, including bases for ballistic missiles with a potential range covering most of North and South America;

WHEREAS by a Joint Resolution passed by the Congress of the United States and approved on October 3, 1962, it was declared that the United States is determined to prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending, by force or the threat of force, its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere, and to prevent in Cuba the creation or use of an externally supported military capability endangering the security of the United States; and

WHEREAS the Organ of Consultation of the American Republics meeting in Washington on October 23, 1962, recommended that the Member States, in accordance with Articles six and eight of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, take all measures, individually and collectively, including the use of armed force, which they may deem necessary to ensure that the Government of Cuba cannot continue to receive from the Sino-Soviet powers military material and related supplies which may threaten the peace and security of the Continent:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN F. KENNEDY, President of the United States of America, acting under and by virtue of the authority conferred upon me by the Constitution and statutes of the United States in accordance with the aforementioned resolutions of the United States Congress and of the Organ of Consultation of the American Republics, and to defend the security of the United States, do hereby proclaim that the forces under my command are ordered, beginning at 2:00 P.M. Greenwich time October 24, 1962, to interdict, subject to the instructions herein contained, the delivery of offensive weapons and associated material to Cuba.

For the purposes of this Proclamation the following are declared to be prohibited material:

Surface-to-surface missiles; bomber aircraft; bombs, air-to-surface rockets and guided missiles; warheads for any of the above weapons; mechanical or electronic equipment to support or operate the above items; and any other classes of material hereafter designated by the Secretary of Defense for the purpose of effectuating this Proclamation.

To enforce this order, the Secretary of Defense shall take appropriate measures to prevent the delivery of prohibited material to Cuba, employing the land, sea, and air forces of the United States in operation with any forces that may be made available by other American States.

The Secretary of Defense may make such regulations and issue such directives as he deems necessary to ensure the effectiveness of this order, including the designation, within a reasonable distance of Cuba, of prohibited or restricted zones and or prescribed routes.

Any vessel or craft which may be proceeding toward Cuba may be intercepted and may be directed to identify itself, its cargo, equipment and stores and its ports of call, to stop, to lie to, to submit to visit and search, or to proceed as directed. Any vessel or craft which fails or refuses to respond to or comply with directions shall be subject to being taken into custody. Any vessel or craft which it is believed is en route to Cuba and may be carrying prohibited material or may itself constitute such material shall, wherever possible, be directed to proceed to another destination of its own choice and shall be taken into custody if it fails or refuses to obey such directions. All vessels or craft taken into custody shall be sent into a port of the United States for appropriate disposition.

In carrying out this order, force shall not be used except in case of failure or refusal to comply with directions, or with regulations or directives of the Secretary of Defense issued hereunder, after reasonable efforts have been made to communicate them to the vessel or craft, or in case of self-defense. In any case, force shall be used only to the extent necessary.

Letter from Prime Minister Castro to Chairman Khrushchev, October 26, 1962

Dear Comrade Khrushchev:

Given the analysis of the situation and the reports which have reached us, [I] consider an attack to be almost imminent — within the next 24 to 72 hours. There are two possible variants: the first and most probable one is an air attack against certain objectives with the limited aim of destroying them; the second, and though less probable, still possible, is a full invasion. This would require a large force and is the most repugnant form of aggression, which might restrain them.

You can be sure that we will resist with determination, whatever the case. The Cuban people's morale is extremely high and the people will confront aggression heroically.

I would like to briefly express my own personal opinion.

If the second variant takes place and the imperialists invade Cuba with the aim of occupying it, the dangers of their aggressive policy are so great that after such an invasion the Soviet Union must never allow circumstances in which the imperialists could carry out a nuclear first strike against it.

I tell you this because I believe that the imperialists' aggressiveness makes them extremely dangerous, and that if they manage to carry out an invasion of Cuba — a brutal act in violation of universal and moral law — then that would be the moment to eliminate this danger forever, in an act of the most legitimate self-defense. However harsh and terrible the solution, there would be no other.

This opinion is shaped by observing the development of their aggressive policy. The imperialists, without regard for world opinion and against laws and principles, have blockaded the seas, violated our air-space, and are preparing to invade, while at the same time blocking any possibility of negotiation, even though they understand the gravity of the problem.

You have been, and are, a tireless defender of peace, and I understand that these moments, when the results of your superhuman efforts are so seriously threatened, must be bitter for you. We will maintain our hopes for saving the peace until the last moment, and we are ready to contribute to this in any way we can. But, at the same time, we are serene and ready to confront a situation which we see as very real and imminent.

I convey to you the infinite gratitude and recognition of the Cuban people to the Soviet people, who have been so generous and fraternal, along with our profound gratitude and admiration to you personally. We wish you success with the enormous task and great responsibilities which are in your hands.

Fraternally,

Fidel Castro

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Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 26, 1962

Dear Mr. President:

I have received your letter of October 25. From your letter I got the feeling that you have some understanding of the situation which has developed, and (some) sense of responsibility. I value this.

Now we have already publicly exchanged our evaluations of the events around Cuba and each of us has set forth his explanation and his understanding of these events. Consequently, I would judge that, apparently, a continuation of an exchange of opinions at such a distance, even in the form of secret letters, will hardly add anything to that which one side has already said to the other.

I think you will understand me correctly if you are really concerned about the welfare of the world. Everyone needs peace: both capitalists, if they have not lost their reason, and, still more, communists, people who know how to value not only their own lives but, more than anything, the lives of the peoples. We, communists, are against all wars between states in general and have been defending the cause of peace since we came into the world. We have always regarded war as a calamity, and not as a game nor as a means of the attainment of definite goals, nor, all the more, as a goal in itself. Our goals are clear, and the means to attain them is labor. War is our enemy and calamity for all the peoples.

It is thus that we, Soviet people, and, together with us, other peoples as well, understand the questions of war and peace. I can, in any case, firmly say this for the peoples of the socialist countries, as well as for all progressive people who want peace, happiness, and friendship among peoples.

I see, Mr. President, that you too are not devoid of a sense of anxiety for the fate of the world, of understanding, and of what war entails. What would a war give you? You are threatening us with war. But you well know that the very least which you would receive in reply would be that you would experience the same consequences as those which you sent us. And that must be clear to us, people invested with authority, trust, and responsibility. We must not succumb to intoxication and petty passions, regardless of whether elections are impending in this or that country, or not impending. These are all transient things, but if indeed war should break out, then it would not be in our power to stop it, for such is the logic of war. I have participated in two wars and know that war ends when it has rolled through cities and villages, everywhere sowing death and destruction.

In the name of the Soviet Government and the Soviet people, I assure you that your conclusions regarding offensive weapons on Cuba are groundless. It is apparent from what you have written me that our conceptions are different on this score, or rather, we have different estimates of these or those military means. Indeed, in reality, the same forms of weapons can have different interpretations.

You are a military man and, I hope, will understand me. Let us take for example a simple cannon. What sort of means is this: offensive or defensive? A cannon is a defensive means if it is set up to defend boundaries or a fortified area. But if one concentrates artillery, and adds to it the necessary number of troops, then the same cannons do become an offensive means, because they prepare and clear the war for infantry to attack. The same happens with missile-nuclear weapons as well, with any type of this weapon.

You are mistaken if you think that any of our means on Cuba are offensive. However, let us not quarrel now. It is apparent that I will not be able to convince you of this. But I say to you: you, Mr. President, are a military man and should understand: one can attack, if one has on one's territory even an enormous quantity of missiles of various effective radiuses and various power, but using only these means. These missiles are a means of

extermination and destruction. But one cannot attack with these missiles, even nuclear missiles of a power of 100 megatons because only people, troops, can attack. Without people, any means however powerful cannot be offensive.

How can one, consequently, give such a completely incorrect interpretation as you are now giving, to the effect that some sort of means on Cuba are offensive. All the means located there, and I assure you of this, have a defensive character, are on Cuba solely for the purposes of defense, and we have sent them to Cuba at the request of the Cuban Government. You, however, say that these are offensive means.

But, Mr. President, do you really seriously think that Cuba can attack the United States and that even we together with Cuba can attack you for the territory of Cuba? Can you really think that way? How is it possible? We do not understand this. Has something so new appeared in military strategy that one can think that it is possible to attack thus, I say precisely attack, and not destroy, since barbarians, people who have lost their sense, destroy.

I believe that you have no basis to think this way. You can regard us with distrust, but, in any case, you can be calm in this regard, that we are of sound mind and understand perfectly well that if we attack you, you will respond the same way. But you too will receive the same that you hurl against us. And I think that you also understand this. My conversation with you in Vienna gives me the right to talk to you this way.

This indicates that we are normal people, that we correctly understand and correctly evaluate the situation. Consequently, how can we permit the incorrect actions which you ascribe to us? Only lunatics or suicides, who themselves want to perish and to destroy the whole world before they die, could do this. We, however, want to live and do not at all want to destroy your country. We want something quite different: to compete with your country on a peaceful basis. We quarrel with you, we have differences on ideological questions. But our view of the world consists in this, that ideological questions, as well as economic problems, should be solved not by military means, they must be solved on the basis of peaceful competition, i.e., as this is understood in capitalist society, on the basis of competition. We have proceeded and are proceeding from the fact that the peaceful coexistence of the two different social-political systems, now existing in the world, is necessary, that it is necessary to assure a stable peace. That is the sort of principle we hold.

You have now proclaimed piratical measures, which were employed in the Middle Ages, when ships proceeding in international waters were attacked, and you have called this "a quarantine" around Cuba. Our vessels, apparently, will soon enter the zone which your Navy is patrolling. I assure you that these vessels, now bound for Cuba, are carrying the most innocent peaceful cargoes. Do you really think that we only occupy ourselves with the carriage of so-called offensive weapons, atomic and hydrogen bombs? Although perhaps your military people imagine that these (cargoes) are some sort of special type of weapon, I assure you that they are the most ordinary peaceful products.

Consequently, Mr. President, let us show good sense. I assure you that on those ships, which are bound for Cuba, there are no weapons at all. The weapons which were necessary for the defense of Cuba are already there. I do not want to say that there were not any shipments of weapons at all. No, there were such shipments. But now Cuba has already received the necessary means of defense.

I don't know whether you can understand me and believe me. But I should like to have you believe in yourself and to agree that one cannot give way to passions; it is necessary to control them. And in what direction are events now developing? If you stop the vessels, then, as you yourself know, that would be piracy. If we started to do that with regard to your ships, then you would also be as indignant as we and the whole world now are. One cannot give another interpretation to such actions, because one cannot legalize lawlessness. If this were

permitted, then there would be no peace, there would also be no peaceful coexistence. We should then be forced to put into effect the necessary measures of a defensive character to protect our interests in accordance with international law. Why should this be done? To what would all this lead?

Let us normalize relations. We have received an appeal from the Acting Secretary General of the UN, U Thant, with his proposals. I have already answered him. His proposals come to this, that our side should not transport armaments of any kind to Cuba during a certain period of time, while negotiations are being conducted — and we are ready to enter such negotiations — and the other side should not undertake any sort of piratical actions against vessels engaged in navigation on the high seas. I consider these proposals reasonable. This would be a way out of the situation which has been created, which would give the peoples the possibility of breathing calmly. You have asked what happened, what evoked the delivery of weapons to Cuba? You have spoken about this to our Minister of Foreign Affairs. I will tell you frankly, Mr. President, what evoked it.

We were very grieved by the fact — I spoke about it in Vienna — that a landing took place, that an attack on Cuba was committed, as a result of which many Cubans perished. You yourself told me then that this had been a mistake. I respected that explanation. You repeated it to me several times, pointing out that not everybody occupying a high position would acknowledge his mistakes as you had done. I value such frankness. For my part, I told you that we too possess no less courage; we also acknowledged those mistakes which had been committed during the history of our state, and not only acknowledged, but sharply condemned them.

If you are really concerned about the peace and welfare of your people, and this is your responsibility as President, then I, as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, am concerned for my people. Moreover, the preservation of world peace should be our joint concern, since if, under contemporary conditions, war should break out, it would be a war not only between the reciprocal claims, but a worldwide cruel and destructive war.

Why have we proceeded to assist Cuba with military and economic aid? The answer is: we have proceeded to do so only for reasons of humanitarianism. At one time, our people itself had a revolution, when Russia was still a backward country. We were attacked then. We were the target of attack by many countries. The USA participated in that adventure. This has been recorded by participants against our country. A whole book has been written about this by General [William Sidney] Graves, who, at that time, commanded the US expeditionary corps. Graves called it *The American Adventure in Siberia.*

We know how difficult it is to accomplish a revolution and how difficult it is to reconstruct a country on new foundations. We sincerely sympathize with Cuba and the Cuban people, but we are not interfering in questions of domestic structure, we are not interfering in their affairs. The Soviet Union desires to help the Cubans build their life as they themselves wish and that others should not hinder them.

You once said that the United States was not preparing an invasion. But you also declared that you sympathized with the Cuban counterrevolutionary emigrants, that you support them and would help them to realize their plans against the present government of Cuba. It is also not a secret to anyone that the threat of armed attack, aggression, has constantly hung, and continues to hang over Cuba. It was only this which impelled us to respond to the request of the Cuban government to furnish it aid for the strengthening of the defensive capacity of this country.

If assurances were given by the President and government of the United States that the USA itself would not participate in an attack on Cuba and would restrain others from actions of this sort, if you would recall you fleet, this would immediately change everything. I am not speaking for Fidel Castro, but I think that he and

the government of Cuba, evidently, would declare demobilization and would appeal to the people to get down to peaceful labor. Then, too, the question of armaments would disappear, since, if there is no threat, then armaments are a burden for every people. Then, too, the question of the destruction, not only of the armaments which you call offensive, but of all other armaments as well, would look different.

I spoke in the name of the Soviet government in the United Nations and introduced a proposal for the disbandment of all armies and for the destruction of all armaments. How then can I now count on those armaments?

Armaments bring only disasters. When one accumulates them, this damages the economy, and if one put them to use, then they destroy people on both sides. Consequently, only a madman can believe that armaments are the principal means in the life of society. No, they are an enforced loss of human energy, and what is more are for the destruction of man himself. If people do not show wisdom, then in the final analysis they will come to a clash, like blind moles, and then reciprocal extermination will begin.

Let us therefore show statesmanlike wisdom. I propose: we, for our part, will declare that our ships, bound for Cuba, will not carry any kind of armaments. You would declare that the United States will not invade Cuba with its forces and will not support any sort of forces which might intend to carry out an invasion of Cuba. Then the necessity for the presence of our military specialists in Cuba would disappear.

Mr. President, I appeal to you to weigh well what the aggressive, piratical actions, which you have declared the USA intends to carry out in international waters, would lead to. You yourself know that any sensible man simply cannot agree with this, cannot recognize your right to such actions.

If you did this, as the first step towards the unleashing of war, well then, it is evident that nothing else is left to us but to accept this challenge of yours. If, however, you have not lost your self-control and sensibly conceive what this might lead to, then, Mr. President, we and you ought not now to pull on the ends of the rope in which you have tied the knot of war, because the more the two of us pull, the tighter that knot will be tied. And a moment may come when that knot will be tied so tight that even he who tied it will not have the strength to untie it, and then it will be necessary to cut that knot. And what that would mean is not for me to explain to you, because you yourself understand perfectly of what terrible forces our countries dispose.

Consequently, if there is no intention to tighten that knot and thereby to doom the world to the catastrophe of thermonuclear war, then let us not only relax the forces pulling on the ends of the rope, let us take measures to untie that knot. We are ready for this.

We welcome all forces which stand on positions of peace. Consequently, I expressed gratitude to Mr. Bertrand Russell, too, who manifests alarm and concern for the fate of the world, and I readily responded to the appeal of the Acting Secretary General of the UN, U Thant.

There, Mr. President, are my thoughts, which, if you agreed with them, could put an end to that tense situation which is disturbing all peoples.

These thoughts are dictated by a sincere desire to relieve the situation, to remove the threat of war.

Respectfully yours,

Nikita Khrushchev

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Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 27, 1962

Dear Mr. President:

It is with great satisfaction that I studied your reply to Mr. U Thant on the adoption of measures in order to avoid contact by our ships and thus avoid irreparable fatal consequences. This reasonable step on your part persuades me that you are showing solicitude for the preservation of peace, and I note this with satisfaction.

I have already said that the only concern of our people and government and myself personally as chairman of the Council of Ministers is to develop our country and have it hold a worthy place among people of the world in economic competition, advance of culture and arts, and the rise in people's living standards. This is the loftiest and most necessary field for competition which will only benefit both the winner and loser, because this benefit is peace and an increase in the facilities by means of which man lives and obtains pleasure.

In your statement, you said that the main aim lies not only in reaching agreement and adopting measures to avert contact of our ships, and, consequently, a deepening of the crisis, which because of this contact can spark off the fire of military conflict after which any talks would be superfluous because other forces and other laws would begin to operate — the laws of war. I agree with you that this is only a first step. The main thing is to normalize and stabilize the situation in the world between states and between people.

I understand your concern for the security of the United States, Mr. President, because this is the first duty of the president. However, these questions are also uppermost in our minds. The same duties rest with me as chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers. You have been worried over our assisting Cuba with arms designed to strengthen its defensive potential — precisely defensive potential — because Cuba, no matter what weapons it had, could not compare with you since these are different dimensions, the more so given up-to-date means of extermination.

Our purpose has been and is to help Cuba, and no one can challenge the humanity of our motives aimed at allowing Cuba to live peacefully and develop as its people desire. You want to relieve your country from danger and this is understandable. However, Cuba also wants this. All countries want to relieve themselves from danger. But how can we, the Soviet Union and our government, assess your actions which, in effect, mean that you have surrounded the Soviet Union with military bases, surrounded our allies with military bases, set up military bases literally around our country, and stationed your rocket weapons at them? This is no secret. High-placed American officials demonstratively declare this. Your rockets are stationed in Britain and in Italy and pointed at us. Your rockets are stationed in Turkey.

You are worried over Cuba. You say that it worries you because it lies at a distance of ninety miles across the sea from the shores of the United States. However, Turkey lies next to us. Our sentinels are pacing up and down and watching each other. Do you believe that you have the right to demand security for your country and the removal of such weapons that your qualify as offensive, while not recognizing this right for us?

You have stationed devastating rocket weapons, which you call offensive, in Turkey literally right next to us. How then does recognition of our equal military possibilities tally with such unequal relations between our great states? This does not tally at all.

It is good, Mr. President, that you agreed for our representatives to meet and begin talks, apparently with the participation of U.N. Acting Secretary General U Thant. Consequently, to some extent, he assumes the role of intermediary, and we believe that he can cope with the responsible mission if, of course, every side that is drawn

into this conflict shows good will.

I think that one could rapidly eliminate the conflict and normalize the situation. Then people would heave a sigh of relief, considering that the statesmen who bear the responsibility have sober minds, an awareness of their responsibility, and an ability to solve complicated problems and not allow matters to slide to the disaster of war.

This is why I make this proposal: We agree to remove those weapons from Cuba which you regard as offensive weapons. We agree to do this and to state this commitment in the United Nations. Your representatives will make a statement to the effect that the United States, on its part, bearing in mind the anxiety and concern of the Soviet state, will evacuate its analogous weapons from Turkey. Let us reach an understanding on what time you and we need to put this into effect.

After this, representatives of the U.N. Security Council could control on-the-spot the fulfillment of these commitments. Of course, it is necessary that the Governments of Cuba and Turkey would allow these representatives to come to their countries and check fulfillment of this commitment, which each side undertakes. Apparently, it would be better if these representatives enjoyed the trust of the Security Council and ours — the United States and the Soviet Union — as well as of Turkey and Cuba. I think that it will not be difficult to find such people who enjoy the trust and respect of all interested sides.

We, having assumed this commitment in order to give satisfaction and hope to the peoples of Cuba and Turkey and to increase their confidence in their security, will make a statement in the Security Council to the effect that the Soviet Government gives a solemn pledge to respect the integrity of the frontiers and the sovereignty of Turkey, not to intervene in its domestic affairs, not to invade Turkey, not to make available its territory as a *place d'armes* for such invasion, and also will restrain those who would think of launching an aggression against Turkey either from Soviet territory or from the territory of other states bordering on Turkey.

The U.S. Government will make the same statement in the Security Council with regard to Cuba. It will declare that the United States will respect the integrity of the frontiers of Cuba, its sovereignty, undertakes not to intervene in its domestic affairs, not to invade and not to make its territory available as [a] *place d'armes* for the invasion of Cuba, and also will restrain those who would think of launching an aggression against Cuba either from U.S. territory or from the territory of other states bordering on Cuba.

Of course, for this we would have to reach agreement with you and to arrange for some deadline. Let us agree to give some time, but not to delay, two or three weeks, not more than a month.

The weapons on Cuba, that you have mentioned and which, as you say, alarm you, are in the hands of Soviet officers. Therefore any accidental use of them whatsoever to the detriment of the United States of America is excluded. These means are stationed in Cuba at the request of the Cuban Government and only in defensive aims. Therefore, if there is no invasion of Cuba, or an attack on the Soviet Union, or other of our allies then, of course, these means do not threaten anyone and will not threaten. For they do not pursue offensive aims.

If you accept my proposal, Mr. President, we would send our representatives to New York, to the United Nations, and would give them exhaustive instructions to order to come to terms sooner. If you would also appoint your men and give them appropriate instructions, this problem could be solved soon.

Why would I like to achieve this? Because the entire world is now agitated and expects reasonable actions from us. The greatest pleasure for all the people would be an announcement on our agreement, on nipping in the

bud the conflict that has arisen. I attach a great importance to such understanding because it might be a good beginning and, specifically, facilitate a nuclear test ban agreement. The problem of tests could be solved simultaneously, not linking one with the other, because they are different problems. However, it is important to reach an understanding to both these problems in order to make a good gift to the people, to let them rejoice in the news that a nuclear test ban agreement has also been reached and thus there will be no further contamination of the atmosphere. Your and our positions on this issue are very close.

All this, possibly, would serve as a good impetus to searching for mutually acceptable agreements on other disputed issues, too, on which there is an exchange of opinion between us. These problems have not yet been solved, but they wait for an urgent solution which would clear the international atmosphere. We are ready for this.

These are my proposals, Mr. President.

Respectfully yours,

Nikita Khrushchev

Letter from President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev, October 27, 1962

I have read your letter of October 26th, with great care and welcomed the statement of your desire to seek a prompt solution to the problem. The first thing that needs to be done, however, is for work to cease on offensive missile bases in Cuba and for all weapons systems in Cuba capable of offensive use to be rendered inoperable, under effective United Nations arrangements.

Assuming this is done promptly, I have given my representatives in New York instructions that will permit them to work out this weekend — in cooperation with the Acting Secretary General and your representative — an arrangement for a permanent solution to the Cuban problem along the lines suggested in your letter of October 26th. As I read your letter, the key elements of your proposals — which seem generally acceptable as I understand them — are as follows:

1) You would agree to remove these weapons systems from Cuba under appropriate United Nations observation and supervision; and undertake, with suitable safeguards, to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba.

2) We, on our part, would agree — upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations to ensure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments — (a) to remove promptly the quarantine measures now in effect and (b) to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba. I am confident that other nations of the Western Hemisphere would be prepared to do likewise.

If you will give your representative similar instructions, there is no reason why we should not be able to complete these arrangements and announce them to the world within a couple of days. The effect of such a settlement on easing world tensions would enable us to work toward a more general arrangement regarding "other armaments," as proposed in your second letter which you made public. I would like to say again that the United States is very much interested in reducing tensions and halting the arms race; and if your letter signifies that you are prepared to discuss a detente affecting NATO and the Warsaw Pact, we are quite prepared to consider with our allies any useful proposals.

But the first ingredient, let me emphasize, is the cessation of work on missile sites in Cuba and measures to render such weapons inoperable, under effective international guarantees. The continuation of this threat, or a prolonging of this discussion concerning Cuba by linking these problems to the broader questions of European and world security, would surely lead to an intensified situation on the Cuban crisis and a grave risk to the peace of the world. For this reason I hope we can quickly agree along the lines outlined in this letter and in your letter of October 26th.

John F. Kennedy

Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, October 28, 1962

Dear Mr. President:

I have received your message of 27 October. I express my satisfaction and thank you for the sense of proportion you have displayed and for realization of the responsibility which now devolves on you for the preservation of the peace of the world.

I regard with great understanding your concern and the concern of the United States people in connection with

the fact that the weapons you describe as offensive are formidable weapons indeed. Both you and we understand what kind of weapons these are.

In order to eliminate as rapidly as possible the conflict which endangers the cause of peace, to give an assurance to all people who crave peace, and to reassure the American people, all of whom, I am certain, also want peace, as do the people of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Government, in addition to earlier instructions on the discontinuation of further work on weapons constructions sites, has given a new order to dismantle the arms which you described as offensive, and to crate and return them to the Soviet Union.

Mr. President, I should like to repeat what I had already written to you in my earlier messages — that the Soviet Government has given economic assistance to the Republic of Cuba, as well as arms, because Cuba and the Cuban people were constantly under the continuous threat of an invasion of Cuba.

A piratic vessel had shelled Havana. They say that this shelling was done by irresponsible Cuban emigres. Perhaps so. However, the question is from where did they shoot. It is a fact that these Cubans have no territory, they are fugitives from their country, and they have no means to conduct military operations.

This means that someone put into their hands these weapons for shelling Havana and for piracy in the Caribbean in Cuban territorial waters. It is impossible in our time not to notice a piratic ship, considering the concentration in the Caribbean of American ships from which everything can be seen and observed.

In these conditions, pirate ships freely roam around and shell Cuba and make piratic attacks on peaceful cargo ships. It is known that they even shelled a British cargo ship. In a word, Cuba was under the continuous threat of aggressive forces, which did not conceal their intention to invade its territory.

The Cuban people want to build their life in their own interests without external interference. This is their right, and they cannot be blamed for wanting to be masters of their own country and disposing of the fruits of their own labor. The threat of invasion of Cuba and all other schemes for creating tension over China are designed to strike the Cuban people with a sense of insecurity, intimidate them, and prevent them from peacefully building their new life.

Mr. President, I should like to say clearly once more that we could not remain indifferent to this. The Soviet Government decided to render assistance to Cuba with means of defense against aggression — only with means for defense purposes. We have supplied the defense means which you describe as offensive means. We have supplied them to prevent an attack on Cuba — to prevent rash acts.

I regard with respect and trust the statement you made in your message of 27 October 1962 that there would be no attack, no invasion of Cuba, and not only on the part of the United States, but also on the part of other nations of the Western Hemisphere, as you said in your same message. Then the motives which induced us to render assistance of such a kind to Cuba disappear.

It is for this reason that we instructed our officers — these means as I had already informed you earlier are in the hands of the Soviet officers — to take appropriate measures to discontinue construction of aforementioned facilities, to dismantle them, and to return them to the Soviet Union. As I had informed you in the letter of 27 October, we are prepared to reach agreement to enable U.N. representatives to verify the dismantling of these means. Thus in view of the assurances you have given and our instructions on dismantling, there is every condition for eliminating the present conflict....

Respectfully yours,

N. Khrushchev

Letter from Prime Minister Castro to Acting Secretary General U Thant, October 28, 1962

U Thant
Acting Secretary General of the United Nations

With reference to the statement made by Mr. John F. Kennedy, President of the United States, in a letter addressed to Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R., to the effect that the United States would agree, after suitable arrangements had been made through the United Nations, to remove the blockade now in effect and to give guarantees against an invasion of Cuba, and with reference to the decision, announced by Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, to withdraw strategic defence weapons facilities from Cuban territory, the Revolutionary Government of Cuba wishes to make the following statement:

The guarantees mentioned by President Kennedy that there will be no aggression against Cuba will be ineffective unless, in addition to the removal of the naval blockade which he promises, the following measures, *inter alia*, are adopted:

1. Cessation of the economic blockade and of all the measures of commercial and economic pressure being carried out by the United States against our country throughout the world.

2. Cessation of all subversive activities, of the dropping and landing of weapons and explosives by air and sea, of the organization of invasions by mercenaries, and of the infiltration of spies and saboteurs — all of which activities are being carried on from the territory of the United States and certain accomplice countries.

3. Cessation of the piratical attacks being carried out from bases in the United States and Puerto Rico.

4. Cessation of all violations of our air space and territorial waters by United States aircraft and warships.

5. Withdrawal of the naval base of Guantanamo and return of the Cuban territory occupied by the United States.

Accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

Major Fidel Castro Ruz
Prime Minister of the Revolutionary Government of Cuba

Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to Prime Minister Castro, October 30, 1962

Dear Comrade Fidel Castro:

....We understand that for you certain difficulties may have emerged as a consequence of the promises we made to the United States to withdraw the missile bases from Cuba in exchange for their promise to abandon their plans to invade Cuba and to prevent their allies in the Western Hemisphere from doing so, to end their so-called "quarantine" — their blockade of Cuba. This commitment has led to an end to the conflict in the Caribbean, a conflict which implied, as you can well understand, a superpower confrontation and its transformation into a world war where the missiles and thermonuclear weapons would have been used. According to our ambassador, certain Cubans feel that the Cuban people would prefer a different kind of statement, one that would not deal with the withdrawal of the missiles. It is possible that such feelings exist among the people. But we, politicians and heads of state, are the people's leaders and the people do not know everything. This is why we must march as the head of the people. Then they will follow and respect us.

If, by giving in to popular sentiment, we had allowed ourselves to be swept up by the more inflamed sectors of the populace, and if we had refused to reach a reasonable agreement with the government of the USA, war

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would have probably broken out, resulting in millions of deaths. Those who survived would have blamed the leaders for not having taken the measures that would have avoided this war of extermination.

The prevention of war and of an attack on Cuba did not depend only on the measures taken by our governments, but also on the analysis and examination of the enemy's actions near your territory. In short, the situation had to be considered as a whole.

Some people say that we did not consult sufficiently with each other before taking the decision of which you know.

In fact, we consider that consultations did take place, dear Comrade Fidel Castro, since we received your cables, one more alarming than the other, and finally your cable of October 27 where you said that you were almost certain that an attack against Cuba was imminent. According to you it was only a matter of time: 24 or 72 hours.

Having received this very alarming cable from you, and knowing of your courage, we believed the alert to be totally justified.

Wasn't that consultation on your part? We interpreted that cable as a sign of maximum alert. But if we had carried on with our consultations in such conditions, knowing that the bellicose and unbridled militarists of the United States wanted to seize the occasion to attack Cuba, we would have been wasting our time and the strike could have taken place.

We think that the presence of our strategic missiles in Cuba has polarized the attention of the imperialists. They were afraid that they would be used, which is why they risked wanting to eliminate them either by bombing them or by invading Cuba. And we must recognize that they had the capability to put them out of action. This is why, I repeat, your sense of alarm was totally justified.

In your cable of October 27 you proposed that we be the first to carry out a nuclear strike against the enemy's territory. Naturally you understand where that would lead us. It would not be a simple strike, but the start of a thermonuclear world war.

Dear Comrade Fidel Castro, I find your proposal to be wrong, even though I understand your reasons.

We have lived through a very grave moment, a global thermonuclear war could have broken out. Of course the United States would have suffered enormous losses, but the Soviet Union and the whole socialist bloc would have also suffered greatly. It is even difficult to say how things would have ended for the Cuban people. First of all, Cuba would have burned in the fires of war. Without a doubt the Cuban people would have fought courageously but, also without a doubt, the Cuban people would have perished heroically. We struggle against imperialism, not in order to die, but to draw on all of our potential, to lose as little as possible, and later to win more, so as to be a victor and make communism triumph.

The measures which we have adopted have allowed us to reach the goal which we had set when we decided to send the missiles to Cuba. We have extracted from the United States the commitment not to invade Cuba and not to allow their Latin American allies to do so. We have accomplished all of this without a nuclear war.

We believe that we must take advantage of all the possibilities to defend Cuba, to strengthen its independence and sovereignty, to thwart military aggression, and to prevent a global thermonuclear war in the present stage.

And we have succeeded.

Of course, we have made concessions, we have made certain commitments. We have acted on the principle of reciprocal concessions. The United States has also made concessions, it has committed itself publicly, before the whole world, not to attack Cuba.

Therefore, if we compare a U.S. attack and thermonuclear war on the one hand, and on the other hand the commitments made, the reciprocal concessions, the guarantee of the inviolability of the Republic of Cuba, and the prevention of a world war, then I think that the conclusion is clear....

N. Khrushchev

Letter from Prime Minister Castro to Chairman Khrushchev, October 31, 1962

Dear Comrade Khrushchev:

I received your letter of October 30. According to you, we were consulted before you took the decision to withdraw the strategic missiles. You justify this statement by referring to the alarming news coming out of Cuba and to my last cable of October 27. I do not know what information you received; I am responding only to the message I sent on the night of the 26th, and which you received on the 27th.

What we did in the face of events, Comrade Khrushchev, was to prepare ourselves and be ready to fight. In Cuba there was only one type of alert: an alert in the face of imminent combat. When, according to us, the imperialist attack was imminent, I thought it appropriate to reveal this to you and to alert both the Soviet government and the Soviet command since there were Soviet forces determined to fight with us in defending the Republic of Cuba against an external aggression, which we could not have stopped but against which we could have resisted.

I told you that the morale of our people was very high and that we would resist aggression heroically. At the end of my message I told you that we would wait for the events calmly.

Danger could not impress us because we had seen it hover over our country for a long time, in a way, we were used to it.

The Soviets who where with us know how admirable the stance of our people during the crisis has been, and of the great fraternity that has developed between men of our two peoples in these decisive hours. Many Cubans and Soviets, who were ready to die in maximum dignity, shed tears when they learned of the surprising decision, unexpected and almost unconditional, to withdraw the weapons.

You perhaps do not know of the extent to which the Cuban people were ready to fulfill their duty towards their Motherland and toward humanity.

I was not unaware, when I wrote them, that the terms I used in my letter could be misinterpreted, and that is what happened: maybe because you did not read them attentively, maybe because of the translation, maybe because I tried to say too much in too few lines. Nevertheless, I did not hesitate to do it. Do you think, Comrade Khrushchev, that we were selfishly thinking of ourselves, of our generous people who were prepared to immolate themselves, not without thought, but fully aware of the risk they were running?

No, Comrade Khrushchev, rarely in history — I can even say never — has any people run such a danger, never has a people been so ready to fight and die with such a universal sense of duty.

We knew, don't think that we didn't, that we would have been exterminated, as you insinuate in your letter, in the case of thermonuclear war. That would, nevertheless, not have prompted us to ask you to withdraw the missiles, to ask you to concede. Do you by any chance think that we wanted such a war? But how to avoid it if an invasion took place? That, precisely, was a possibility, since the imperialists were blocking every solution and their demands, in our opinion, were unacceptable to the USSR and to Cuba....

Fraternally,

Fidel Castro

Letter from Chairman Khrushchev to President Kennedy, December 10, 1962

Dear Mr. President,

...I will tell you frankly that we have removed our means from Cuba relying on your assurance that the United States and its allies will not invade Cuba. Those means really had the purpose of defending the sovereignty of Cuba and therefore after your assurance they lost their purpose. We hope and we would like to believe — I spoke of that publicly too, as you know — that you will adhere to the commitments which you have taken, as strictly as we do with regard to our commitments. We, Mr. President, have already fulfilled our commitments concerning the removal of our missiles and IL-28 planes from Cuba and we did it even ahead of time. It is obvious that fulfillment by you of your commitments cannot be as clearly demonstrated as it was done by us since your commitments are of a long-term nature. But it is important to fulfill them and to do everything so that no doubts are sown from the very start that they will not be fulfilled...

...We believe that the guarantees for non-invasion of Cuba given by you will be maintained and not only in the period of your stay in the White House, that, to use an expression, goes without saying. We believe that you will be able to receive a mandate at the next election too, that is that you will be the U.S. President for six years, which would appeal to us. At our times, six years in world politics is a long period of time and during that period we could create good conditions for peaceful coexistence on earth and this would be highly appreciated by the peoples of our countries as well as by all other peoples.

Therefore, Mr. President, I would like to express a wish that you follow the right way, as we do, in appraising the situation. Now it is of special importance to provide for the possibility of an exchange of opinion through confidential channels which you and I have set up and which we use. But the confidential nature of our personal relations will depend on whether you fulfill — as we did — the commitments taken by you and give instructions to your representatives in New York to formalize these commitments in appropriate documents. This is needed in order that all the peoples be sure that tension in the Caribbean is a matter of yesterday and that now normal conditions have been really created in the world. And for this it is necessary to fix the assumed commitments in the documents of both sides and register them with the United Nations...

Respectfully yours,

N. Khrushchev

Letter from President Kennedy to Chairman Khrushchev, December 14, 1962

Dear Mr. Chairman:

...You refer to the importance of my statements on an invasion of Cuba and of our intention to fulfill them, so that no doubts are sown from the start. I have already stated my position publicly in my press conference on November 20th, and I am glad that this statement appears to have your understanding; we have never wanted to be driven by the acts of others into war in Cuba. The other side of the coin, however, is that we do need to have adequate assurances that all offensive weapons are removed from Cuba and are not reintroduced, and that Cuba itself commits no aggressive acts against any of the nations of the Western Hemisphere. As I understand you, you feel confident that Cuba will not in fact engage in such aggressive acts, and of course I already have your own assurance about the offensive weapons. So I myself should suppose that you would accept our position — but it is probably better to leave final discussion of these matters to our representatives in New York. I quite agree with you that the larger part of the crisis has now been ended and we should not permit others to stand in the way of promptly settling the rest with further acrimony...

John F. Kennedy

Publications List

The Choices for the 21st Century Education Project develops curricula for high schools and colleges on current foreign policy issues and offers workshops, institutes, and in-service programs for high school teachers. Course materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens. All units incorporate the work of academics and policymakers from a range of perspectives and are classroom tested prior to publication. A new unit is published every three months during the academic year, and all units are updated regularly. For current information on new titles and revisions, call the Choices Education Project at (401) 863-3155.

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- Ending the War against Japan: Science, Morality, and the Atomic Bomb (July 1995, 102 pages)
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A teacher's resource book is included free with each unit ordered at regular price.

High School Textbook

- In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy (Revised September 1995, 111 pages, teacher's resource book also included)

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ALTERNATIVES FOR PUBLIC DEBATE
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Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

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United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Regina Cortina, *Associate Director*
Center for Latin American Studies, Watson Institute

Mark Garrison, *Former Director*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Sergei N. Khrushchev, *Senior Visiting Scholar*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Mark Kramer, *Research Associate*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

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Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

Richard Smoke, *Research Director*
Center for Foreign Policy Development, Watson Institute

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CHOICES

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Director
Susan Graseck

Curriculum Developer
Mark Malkasian

Director of School Programs
Patricia Keenan-Byrne

Program Associate
Lucy Mueller

Staff Associate
Anne Campau Prout

Office Assistant
Cynthia Manzotti

Contributing Author
Louise K. Davidson

Graphic Design Adviser
Richard Gann

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Thomas J. Biersteker
Director

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THE CHOICES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION PROJECT is a program of the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies at Brown University. CHOICES was established to help citizens think constructively about foreign policy issues, to improve participatory citizenship skills, and to encourage public judgment on policy priorities.

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About the Choices Approach

Choices for the 21st Century curricula are designed to make complex international issues understandable and meaningful for students. Using an innovative approach to student-centered instruction, Choices units develop critical thinking and civic judgment — essential ingredients of responsible citizenship.

Understanding the Significance of History: Each Choices unit provides students with a thorough introduction to the topic under consideration. Students gain an understanding of the historical background and the status of current issues. In this way, they see how history has shaped our world. With this foundation, students are prepared to thoughtfully consider a variety of perspectives on public policy.

Exploring Policy Alternatives: Each Choices unit is built around a framework of alternative policy options that challenges students to consider multiple perspectives and to think critically about the issue at hand. Students are best able to understand and analyze the options through a cooperative learning/role-play activity. In groups, students explore their assigned options and plan short presentations. The setting of the role-play may be a Congressional hearing, meeting of the National Security Council, or an election campaign forum. Student groups defend their policy options and, in turn, are challenged with questions from their classmates. The ensuing debate demands analysis and evaluation of the many conflicting values, interests, and priorities reflected in the options.

Exercising Civic Judgment: Armed with fresh insights from the role-play and debate, students are challenged to articulate original, coherent policy options that reflect their own values, priorities, and goals as individuals and citizens. Students' views can be expressed in letters to Congress or the White House, editorials for the school or community newspaper, persuasive speeches, or visual presentations.

Why Use the Choices Approach? Choices curricula are informed by current educational research about how students learn best. Studies have consistently demonstrated that students of all abilities learn best when they are actively engaged with the material rather than listening passively to a lecture. Student-centered instructional activities motivate students and develop higher-order thinking skills. However, some high school educators find the transition from lecture format to student-centered instruction difficult. Lecture is often viewed as the most efficient way to cover the required material. Choices curricula offer teachers a flexible resource for covering course material while actively engaging students and developing skills in critical thinking, persuasive writing, and informed citizenship. The instructional activities that are central to Choices units can be valuable components in any teacher's repertoire of effective teaching strategies. Each Choices unit includes student readings, a framework of policy options, suggested lesson plans, and resources for structuring cooperative learning, role-plays, and simulations. Students are challenged to:

- recognize relationships between history and current issues
- analyze and evaluate multiple perspectives on an issue
- understand the internal logic of a viewpoint
- engage in informed debate
- identify and weigh the conflicting values represented by different points of view
- reflect upon personal values and priorities surrounding an issue
- develop and articulate original viewpoints on an issue
- communicate in written and oral presentations
- collaborate with peers

Teachers who use Choices units say the collaboration and interaction that take place are highly motivating for students. Opportunities abound for students to contribute their individual talents to the group presentations in the form of political cartoons, slogans, posters, or characterizations. These cooperative learning lessons invite students to take pride in their own contributions and the group product, enhancing students' self-esteem and confidence as learners. Choices units offer students with diverse abilities and learning styles the opportunity to contribute, collaborate, and achieve.

Note to Teachers

Like no other region of the globe, the Caribbean Basin has served as a testing ground for U.S. foreign policy. From the Monroe Doctrine to Cold War containment, from the Big Stick and Dollar Diplomacy to the Good Neighbor Policy and the Alliance for Progress, the countries of the Caribbean and Central America have felt the full weight of their colossal neighbor to the north. The region has also been the scene of many of our nation's most riveting foreign policy dramas. U.S. expansion overseas traces its beginnings to the explosion of the *Maine*, Teddy Roosevelt's charge up San Juan Hill, and the construction of the Panama Canal, while our country's struggle with the Soviet Union reached the boiling point during the Cuban missile crisis and the *contra* war against the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy probes the complex, often troubled, relationship between the United States and the countries of the Caribbean Basin, and assesses the place of the region in the broader context of U.S. foreign policy. The unit contains two focal points. Part II of the background reading analyzes the Cold War dynamics that resulted in the Cuban missile crisis and examines the decision-making process within the Kennedy administration at the height of the confrontation with the Soviet Union. At the conclusion of the unit, students explore a framework of three distinct options for present-day U.S. policy toward the Caribbean Basin. By exploring a wide-ranging spectrum of alternatives, students gain a more thorough understanding of the values underlying specific policy recommendations. Parts I and III of the background reading, which survey the evolution of U.S. involvement in the Caribbean and Central America from the early 19th century to the present, are intended to prepare students to thoughtfully consider both the ramifications of the Cuban missile crisis and the issues framing current U.S. policies in the region.

Suggested Ten-Day Lesson Plan: The Teacher's Resource Book accompanying *In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy* contains a day-by-day lesson plan and student activities. The opening lesson introduces students to important milestones in our country's relationship with the Caribbean and Central America. The second day of the lesson plan focuses on the misperceptions and miscalculations that contributed to the Cuban missile crisis. Over the next four days, students delve deeper into the missile crisis through a simulation set in October 1962 and a documents exercise based on letters exchanged between Nikita Khrushchev and John F. Kennedy. On the seventh day, students examine the tangled triangle of U.S.-Soviet-Cuban relations during the Cold War. The eighth and ninth days bring the unit up to the present with a simulation in which students assume the role of advocates of the three options. Finally, on the tenth day, students apply their own options to a set of hypothetical regional crises. You may also find the "Alternative Five-Day Lesson Plan" useful.

The lesson plan offered in *In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy* is a guide. Many teachers choose to devote additional time to certain activities. We hope that these suggestions help you in tailoring the unit to fit the needs of your classroom.

Integrating This Unit into Your Curriculum

Units produced by the Choices for the 21st Century Education Project are designed to be integrated into a variety of social studies courses. Below are a few ideas about where *In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy* might fit into your curriculum.

International Crises in the Nuclear Age: The Cuban missile crisis stands out as the most dramatic superpower confrontation of the nuclear age. The crisis affords a glimpse into the decision-making process at the highest levels of government in the United States and the Soviet Union. The strategies, goals, and fears driving the foreign policies of the superpowers clearly emerge from the events of October 1962. At the same time, the Cuban missile crisis offers lessons in political psychology that transcend the tensions of the Cold War. Scholars and policymakers continue to study the crisis for insights into how the presence of nuclear weapons has reshaped the nature of international conflict and heightened the pressures of national leadership.

American Imperialism: The U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War at the turn of the century transformed the United States into an imperialist power. The acquisition of Puerto Rico, control over Cuba, and the subsequent opening of the Panama Canal created a new set of interests for U.S. foreign policy. Proponents of naval might pressed for an expansion of the U.S. fleet. American businesses strengthened their presence in the Caribbean Basin. At the same time, anti-imperialist forces warned that the United States was destined to acquire the worst features of the European colonial powers. *In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy* allows students to assess how our country's experience with imperialism in the Caribbean Basin has shaped the U.S. role in the world in the 20th century.

Latin American History: The history of Latin America, especially the Caribbean and Central America, has been inextricably intertwined with the history of the United States. The U.S. political system initially served as a model, and later as a yardstick, for the republics of Latin America. Economically, the region has been bound to the United States in the 20th century by trade and investment ties. The foreign policies of Latin American countries have been largely circumscribed by U.S. interests. Even in the cultural sphere, U.S. influence has trickled down into the daily lives of Latin Americans. In a unit on Latin America, *In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy* provides an introduction to the complex, multifaceted relationship between the two leading cultures of the Western Hemisphere.

The Cold War in the Third World: As the battle lines of the Cold War extended beyond Europe in the 1950s, the Caribbean and Central America increasingly became a region of superpower confrontation. Communist Cuba, in particular, emerged as an international flashpoint and an object of often almost obsessive concern for many U.S. policymakers. Meanwhile, deeply rooted conflicts in Central America and the islands of the Caribbean took on the ideological shadings of the Cold War. *In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy* offers students a broader understanding of the international consequences of the Cold War and the challenges facing what was once known as the Third World.

U.S. Influence in the Caribbean and Central America

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify the main themes related to U.S. involvement in the Caribbean Basin.
- Assess the perspective of Caribbean Basin countries toward the United States.
- Collaborate with classmates to develop effective group presentations.

Required Reading:

Before beginning the unit, students should have read Part I of the background reading and completed "Study Guide — Part I."

Handouts:

- "Examining U.S. Involvement in the Caribbean and Central America" (page 5).

In the Classroom:

1. Forming Small Groups — Divide the class into groups of three to four students. Assign each group one of following eight topics:

Manifest Destiny	U.S.-Nicaraguan Relations (1850s-1930s)
Spanish-American War	Panama Canal
United Fruit Company	Jacobo Arbenz
Fulgencio Batista	Bay of Pigs

2. Student Presentations — Instruct the groups to use Part I of the background reading, as well as their textbooks and other information sources, to prepare two-to-three minute presentations on their topics. (See "Examining U.S. Involvement in the Caribbean and Central America.") After students have completed their preparations, call on group spokespersons to make their presentations to the class.

3. Making Connections — Ask students to focus on drawing connections among the eight topics under consideration. For example, how were the values of Manifest Destiny reflected in U.S. involvement in Nicaragua? How did the Spanish-American War help pave the way for the construction of the Panama Canal and the growth of the United Fruit Company? What topics have had the greatest impact on the attitudes of people in the Caribbean Basin toward the United States?

Extra Challenge:

Require students to summarize the main points from the presentation of each group.

Name:

Study Guide — Part I
U.S. Relations with the Caribbean and Central America

1. How did Manifest Destiny shape U.S. involvement in Latin America?

2. What were the forces that led the United States to declare war on Spain?

3. How did U.S. involvement in the Caribbean and Central America during the early part of the 20th century affect the development of the region?

4. How did the Cold War influence U.S. policy in the Caribbean and Central America?

5. What factors led to the fall of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba?

6. Why did U.S.-Cuban relations turn hostile soon after Fidel Castro came to power?

Name:

Examining U.S. Involvement in the Caribbean and Central America

Instructions: Your group has been assigned an important topic featured in Part I of the background reading. You should prepare a two-to-three minute presentation on your topic for the class. Your presentation should explain how your topic is connected to the overall role of the United States in the Caribbean and Central America. In addition to reviewing Part I of the background reading, you should use other information sources that deal with your topic. This worksheet will help you organize your presentation.

1. Which historical developments are most closely linked to the emergence of your topic?

2. How did your topic influence the direction of U.S. involvement in the Caribbean and Central America?

3. How was your topic connected to the broader goals of U.S. foreign policy?

4. How would the perspective of people in the Caribbean and Central America differ from the perspective of Americans with respect to your topic?

5. How did your topic affect relations between the countries of the Caribbean and Central America and the United States?

Retracing the Path to October 1962

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify the tensions in U.S.-Soviet-Cuban relations that contributed to the Cuban missile crisis.
- Explore the differences in perspective that divided U.S., Soviet, and Cuban leaders in 1962.
- Analyze the factors influencing the key policy decisions of the Cuban missile crisis.

Handouts:

- "U.S.-Soviet-Cuban Relations — Discussion Questions" (page 7).

In the Classroom:

1. Forming Small Groups — Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Assign to each group the role of the United States, Cuba, or the Soviet Union. (In classes of more than fifteen students, each country may be represented by two groups.) Distribute "U.S.-Soviet-Cuban Relations — Discussion Questions." Emphasize that students should respond to the questions from the perspective of their assigned country in early October 1962.

2. Clarifying Positions — After the groups have answered the discussion questions, ask them to share their responses with the entire class. Note the differences in interpretation among the three countries. For example, how does each country view the U.S. reaction to the revolution in Cuba? What was the driving force behind the warming relationship between Moscow and Havana? Should U.S. leaders have taken a more conciliatory approach to Castro? Was a collision between the United States and Castro's Cuba unavoidable?

Homework:

Students should read Part II of the background reading and complete "Study Guide — Part II." (As an alternative approach, instruct students to read Part II only up to the "On the Brink" section on page 25. They should read the conclusion of Part II — which examines the most critical decision points of the crisis — after they have completed the simulation scheduled for Days Three and Four.)

U.S.-Soviet-Cuban Relations — Discussion Questions

Instructions: Your group has been assigned to represent the viewpoint of either the United States, the Soviet Union, or Cuba in early October 1962. You should complete this worksheet from the perspective of your assigned country. Keep in mind that your responses should be based only on information that was available in early October 1962 — just before the events of the Cuban missile crisis unfolded. Be prepared to share your responses with the class.

1. Assess the role of the United States in Cuba from the end of the Spanish-American War to 1901.

2. What were the reasons behind U.S. policy toward Fidel Castro during the first three years (1959-1961) of the Cuban revolution?

3. What have been Castro's chief motives for shaping Cuba's domestic and foreign policies since 1959?

4. What were the reasons behind the decision of the United States to support the Bay of Pigs invasion?

5. Explain why Cuba strengthened its ties with the Soviet Union after the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Inside the Cuban Missile Crisis

Objectives:

Students will:

- Evaluate the goals, options, and fears that influenced U.S., Soviet, and Cuban leaders during the missile crisis.
- Integrate historical lessons and policy analysis into the decision-making process of a simulated crisis.
- Develop communication and negotiating skills in a collaborative setting.

Required Reading:

Students should have read Part II of the background reading and completed "Study Guide — Part II."

Handouts:

- "United States — Secret and Confidential" (pages 13-14) for the U.S. group.
- "Soviet Union — Secret and Confidential" (pages 15-16) for the Soviet group.
- "Cuba — Secret and Confidential" (pages 17-18) for the Cuban group.
- "United Nations — Secret and Confidential" (page 19) for the UN group.

Note: A single die should be available for the U.S. and Soviet groups.

In the Classroom:

1. Forming Small Groups — Divide the class into four groups. Three of the groups will represent either the United States, the Soviet Union, or Cuba, while members of the fourth group will serve as mediators for the UN. (Students representing Cuba should be particularly outspoken and articulate since the Cubans have fewer options and must rely more on negotiating skills.) Assign a role to each of the groups and distribute the appropriate handouts. Note that information on the handouts should not be shared with other groups. Organize the desks so that the Soviet and Cuban groups sit on one side of the room, the United States on the opposite side, and the UN in the middle. Position the groups as far apart as possible.

2. Recreating the Crisis — Read President Kennedy's speech to the nation of October 22, 1962 (page 12), to focus students on a crucial moment of decision-making. Following Kennedy's address, allow students a few minutes to read their handouts. Explain that they should review Part II of the background reading to understand the objectives and options of each country. Students should also follow the instructions in "Organizing Your Group" and carefully examine "Crisis Rules."

3. Explaining the Rules — After students have reviewed their handouts, explain that the activity may end as a result of a written agreement or a decisive military action. Announce that there will be a break at the midway point of each class period to review the progress of the simulation and eliminate confusion. At this time, the UN will be called upon to report on the progress of negotiations.

4. Managing the Simulation — To begin the simulation, call on the UN to send out liaisons to discuss ideas for treaty proposals with each of the groups. Explain that military action cannot be undertaken during the first twenty minutes of the simulation. (A U.S. naval blockade of Cuba is not considered a military action.) Inform the U.S. and Soviet groups that they must roll a die to determine the outcome of their military actions. Encourage the United States and the Soviet Union to seriously explore diplomatic options before pursuing

military action. (The Soviets have a nuclear option unknown to the other groups.) Emphasize that each group's decisions should be based on reasoned, well-informed analysis.

5. Assessing Objectives and Options — After the simulation is completed, call on students to compare the objectives and options of the U.S., Soviet, and Cuban groups. What factors led Kennedy to avoid the use of military force? Why did the Soviets ultimately back away from a military confrontation? What role did nuclear weapons play in the crisis?

6. Sorting Out Misperceptions — Explain that much of the drama of the Cuban missile crisis was attributable to the misperceptions and miscalculations of the decision-makers involved in the conflict. Urge students to apply the lessons they have learned from the simulation to re-evaluating the path to October 1962. For example, how did the development of U.S.-Soviet-Cuban relations after 1959 shape the Kennedy administration's response to the missile crisis? What factors accounted for Khrushchev's risky efforts to place nuclear missiles in Cuba? Why was Castro willing to take his country to the brink of war to secure the installation of Soviet nuclear weapons in Cuba? Ask students to identify the most significant misperceptions that contributed to the aggravation of the missile crisis.

7. Clarifying History — Explain that elements of the simulation departed from the historical record of the crisis. The following examples are most noteworthy.

a. During the missile crisis, U.S. policymakers worked under the assumption that the Soviets had everything they needed in Cuba to launch nuclear missiles, although U.S. radiation sensors did not detect the presence of nuclear warheads on the island. In 1992, the head of operational planning for the Soviet General Staff during the missile crisis, General Anatoliy Gribkov, confirmed that the Soviets had indeed placed tactical nuclear warheads in Cuba at the time of the missile crisis. Cuban officials assumed that the Soviet nuclear missiles on the island could have been launched within a few hours or were in the final stages of preparation. The Cubans, though, were largely denied access to the missile sites. The U.S. blockade announced October 22, 1962, was aimed at limiting Soviet military operations in general rather than merely halting the installation of nuclear missiles in Cuba. At the time, U.S. officials imagined that the confrontation would continue for months and sought to prepare the public for a long struggle. Contemporary news reports affirm that the missile crisis was perceived as an extension of the conflict over West Berlin. Just as West Berlin was thought of as an outpost of the Free World surrounded by communism, Cuba was seen as the lone Soviet ally in the Western Hemisphere.

b. The UN played little part in resolving the crisis. President Kennedy believed that more could be accomplished outside of the international forum, and he personally disliked the U.S. ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson. Most of the critical communication between the United States and the Soviet Union took place through channels hidden from public view. Especially important were the meetings between Attorney General Robert Kennedy and Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy Dobrynin. From October 23 until October 28, 1962, Kennedy and Dobrynin held several secret meetings after midnight without the knowledge of the U.S. State Department. Another

intriguing link developed between Aleksandr Fomin, the KGB station chief in Washington, D.C., and senior ABC news reporter John Scali. The two met three times in different restaurants. During their conversations, Fomin suggested that the Soviets might consider removing their missiles from Cuba if the United States would do the same in Turkey. Scali took the proposal directly to his contact in the State Department. In this case, Fomin was operating independently of the Soviet embassy. During the heat of the crisis, Moscow permitted its diplomats a substantial amount of latitude to probe for potential areas of compromise with their U.S. contacts.

c. The Soviets genuinely feared that the United States would launch a nuclear strike against their country. Especially chilling was the fact that the U.S. Strategic Air Command used an open radio channel to announce the shift to DEFCON 2 on October 24, thus allowing the Soviets to listen in. Top Soviet officials responded by moving their headquarters to a bunker thirty feet below ground.

Homework: Students should read Khrushchev's October 26, 1962, and October 27, 1962, letters to Kennedy (see pages 58-64 of the Supplementary Documents in the student text), and complete "Khrushchev to Kennedy: Documents from the Cuban Missile Crisis."

Study Guide — Part II

The Cuban Missile Crisis — Thirteen Days on the Brink

1. Why did Cuba become a focal point of U.S.-Soviet conflict?

2. Why did the Soviets want to install nuclear missiles in Cuba?

3. What were the options considered by President Kennedy in response to the missiles?

4. Why did Kennedy respond only to the first letter he received from Khrushchev?

5. What did Kennedy mean by saying that the United States "made every effort...to give our adversary room to move"?

6. In what ways did Castro's view of the conclusion of the crisis differ from the views of Kennedy and Khrushchev?

President John F. Kennedy's Speech to the Nation, October 22, 1962*

This Government as promised has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military build-up on the island of Cuba.

Within the past week unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island.

The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere.

Upon receiving the first preliminary hard information of this nature last Tuesday morning at 9 a.m., I directed that our surveillance be stepped up. And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence and our decision on a course of action, this Government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in fullest detail.

The characteristics of these new missile sites indicate two distinct types of installations. Several of them include medium-range ballistic missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more than 1,000 nautical miles.

Each of these missiles, in short, is capable of striking Washington, D.C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City or any other city in the southeastern part of the United States, in Central America or in the Caribbean area.

Additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for intermediate-range ballistic missiles capable of traveling more than twice as far, and thus capable of striking most of the major cities in the Western Hemisphere ranging as far north as Hudson's Bay, Canada, and as far south as Lima, Peru.

In addition, jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated and assembled in Cuba while the necessary air bases are being prepared.

This urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base by the presence of these large long-range and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction constitutes an explicit threat to the peace and security of all the Americas in flagrant and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this nation and hemisphere, the joint resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations and my own public warnings to the Soviets on Sept. 4 and 13.

I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations.

I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination and to join in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and to transform the history of man.

He has an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction by returning to his Government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba; by refraining from any action which will widen or deepen the present crisis, and then by participating in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

*From *The New York Times*, October 23, 1962.

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United States — Secret and Confidential

Introduction: In this exercise, you and your classmates will go back in time to October 22, 1962 — the day when President Kennedy publicly announced the U.S. response to the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. Your group has been called upon to represent the United States in the Cuban missile crisis. Your group, along with groups representing the Soviet Union and Cuba, will try to achieve a set of secret and confidential objectives. Each group will make use of a limited number of options to achieve its objectives. In addition, a fourth group, serving as United Nations (UN) mediators, will try to negotiate an end to the crisis. In considering the actions of your group, you should use Parts I and II of the background reading to predict the objectives and options of the countries involved in the crisis.

The U.S. Position: Your country is the strongest power on earth, but you are increasingly challenged by the Soviet Union and its communist allies. On October 15, 1962, you discovered that the Soviets are attempting to install forty-three long-range nuclear missiles on the island of Cuba. These missiles pose a threat to the United States that cannot be tolerated. Now, one week later, your group has come together to decide on the U.S. course of action.

Organizing Your Group: Your group should first choose a president. The job of the president is to take responsibility for making decisions after listening to the opinions of everyone in the group. Your president should appoint representatives of the State Department to pursue diplomatic options, and representatives of the Defense Department to pursue military options. Although everyone in your group shares the same objectives, State Department representatives are expected to encourage diplomacy while Defense Department representatives should suggest military action.

Crisis Rules: Any member of your group may negotiate at the UN, but only three members may leave your group's headquarters at any one time. No member may stay away from your group for more than fifteen minutes. Your group cannot undertake military action (Options 3-5) during the first twenty minutes of the simulation. Finally, the president is responsible for ensuring that all members of your group properly perform their roles.

U.S. Objectives: Your group's goal is to achieve as many of the following objectives as possible, either by signing agreements or by taking military action. Note that your objectives have different point values.

5 points — Remove Soviet missiles from Cuba.

5 points — Remove Fidel Castro from power

5 points — Prevent nuclear weapons from striking the United States

3 points — Remove Soviet bombers from Cuba.

3 points — Prevent the Soviets from supplying Cuba by ship without imposing a naval blockade.

3 points — End Cuban support for revolutionary movements in Latin America.

3 points — End Soviet military aid to Cuba.

U.S. Options: Read through your options carefully to understand what the United States can do and what it cannot do. Note that you have both diplomatic and military options. Options 2-5 may each be exercised only once.

1. The United States may pursue diplomacy to gain its objectives by negotiating with the Soviet Union and Cuba through the UN. You must conduct negotiations in the presence of a UN mediator. You cannot speak privately with representatives of the Soviet Union or Cuba. To begin the negotiation process, your State Department representatives should write down proposals for an agreement based on U.S. objectives. For example, you might propose the following to open negotiations:

United States — Secret and Confidential (Page 2)

1. The Soviet Union agrees to remove its missiles from Cuba.
2. Cuba agrees to end support for revolutionary movements in Latin America.

Of course, do not expect the Soviets and Cubans to immediately accept your proposals. Once you begin negotiating at the UN, you will find that the Soviets and Cubans have their own proposals to present. The UN representatives should help you to develop an agreement that contains something attractive for everyone involved. Before your president signs anything, your group should study the agreement to make sure that you have achieved some of your country's objectives.

2. The United States may impose a naval blockade of Cuba to prevent Soviet ships from bringing more military supplies to the island. At this stage, you are hoping that the Soviets have not yet delivered all of the military supplies to ready their missiles in Cuba for use.

3. The United States may use its air force to bomb the missile sites in Cuba. This option requires that you roll a die to determine the outcome of your action. Below is a range of possible outcomes:

Six — You destroy the missile sites *and* Soviet bomber forces in Cuba.

Five — You destroy the missile sites.

Four — Three-fifths of the missile sites are destroyed.

Three — Two-fifths of the missile sites are destroyed.

Two — Your bombers miss their targets.

One — A number of your bombers are shot down by anti-aircraft weapons. The United States is unable to exercise non-nuclear military options for the remainder of the crisis.

4. The United States may invade Cuba with a force of 100,000 soldiers supported by air power. This option requires that you roll a die to determine the outcome of your action. Below is a range of possible outcomes:

Six — You destroy the missile sites *and* Soviet bomber forces in Cuba *and* capture Fidel Castro.

Five — You destroy the missile sites *and* Soviet bomber forces in Cuba. Fidel Castro remains in control of most of the island.

Four — You destroy the missile sites. Fidel Castro remains in control of most of the island and has Soviet military forces to protect him.

Three — Bad weather forces you to call back your invasion force before it reaches Cuba.

Two-One — Your forces fail to advance beyond the landing area. The United States is unable to exercise non-nuclear military options for the remainder of the crisis.

5. The United States may launch a first strike of nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union. This option requires that you roll a die to determine the outcome of your action. The range of possible outcomes is as follows:

Six-Five — Your nuclear weapons destroy the capability of the Soviet military to retaliate and kill tens of millions of Soviets.

Four-One — Your nuclear weapons kill tens of millions of Soviets, but the Soviet retaliatory strike kills tens of millions of Americans.

Soviet Union — Secret and Confidential

Introduction: In this exercise, you and your classmates will go back in time to October 22, 1962 — the day when President Kennedy publicly announced the U.S. response to the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. Your group has been called upon to represent the Soviet Union in the Cuban missile crisis. Your group, along with groups representing the United States and Cuba, will try to achieve a set of secret and confidential objectives. Each group will make use of a limited number of options to achieve its objectives. In addition, a fourth group, serving as United Nations (UN) mediators, will try to negotiate an end to the crisis. In considering the actions of your group, you should use Parts I and II of the background reading to predict the objectives and options of the countries involved in the crisis.

The Soviet Position: Your country is the second strongest power on earth, but you are still well behind the United States. You are attempting to install forty-three long-range nuclear missiles in Cuba to even the balance of power and help protect the new communist government there. Your forces in Cuba have maintained complete control of Soviet military facilities on the island. On October 15, 1962, however, the United States discovered the missiles. Now, one week later, your group has come together to decide on the Soviet Union's course of action during this crisis.

Organizing Your Group: Your group should first choose a general secretary. The job of the general secretary is to take responsibility for making decisions after listening to the opinions of everyone in the group. Your general secretary should appoint representatives of the foreign ministry to pursue diplomatic options and representatives of the defense ministry to pursue military options. Although everyone in your group shares the same objectives, foreign ministry representatives are expected to encourage diplomacy while defense ministry representatives should suggest military action.

Crisis Rules: Any member of your group may negotiate at the UN, but only three members may leave your group's headquarters at any one time. No member may stay away from your group for more than fifteen minutes. Your group cannot undertake military action (Options 3-4) during the first twenty minutes of the simulation. Finally, the general secretary is responsible for ensuring that all members of your group properly perform their roles.

Soviet Objectives: Your group's goal is to achieve as many of the following objectives as possible, either by signing agreements or by taking military action. Note that your objectives have different point values.

5 points — Keep Soviet missiles in Cuba.

5 points — Ensure that the United States will not attack the communist government in Cuba.

5 points — Prevent U.S. nuclear weapons from striking the Soviet Union.

3 points — Supply Cuba by ship.

3 points — Remove U.S. nuclear missiles from Turkey.

3 points — Establish a permanent Soviet air base in Cuba.

3 points — Reduce U.S. military aid in Latin America by fifty percent.

Soviet Options: Read through your options carefully to understand what the Soviet Union can do and what it cannot do. Note that you have both diplomatic and military options. Options 2-5 may be exercised only once.

1. The Soviet Union may pursue diplomacy to gain its objectives by negotiating with the United States and Cuba. Cuba is your ally, and you may speak directly with Cuban representatives at any time. In contrast, you can negotiate with representatives of the United States only in the presence of a UN mediator.

Soviet Union — Secret and Confidential (Page 2)

To begin the negotiation process, your foreign ministry representatives should write down proposals for an agreement based on Soviet objectives. For example, you might propose the following to open negotiations:

1. The United States agrees not to attack the communist government in Cuba.
2. The United States agrees to remove nuclear missiles from Turkey.

Of course, do not expect the United States to immediately accept your proposals. Once you begin negotiating at the UN, you will find that the United States has its own proposals to present. The UN representatives should help you to develop an agreement that contains something attractive for everyone involved. Before your general secretary signs anything, your group should study the agreement to make sure that you have achieved some of your country's objectives.

2. The Soviet Union may send military supplies to Cuba by ship. These supplies are critical to installing your nuclear missiles on the island. You must wait thirty minutes after the start of the crisis before supplying Cuba. If the U.S. Navy does not impose a blockade within thirty minutes, you may make an announcement that your ships have successfully supplied Cuba.

3. If the U.S. Navy tries to stop your ships from bringing more military supplies to Cuba, the Soviet Union may challenge the blockade. In this case, you would have to engage U.S. ships in combat. This option requires that you roll a die to determine the outcome of your action. Below is a range of possible outcomes:

Six — Attacks by your submarines and surface ships undermine the U.S. Navy's ability to enforce a blockade during the crisis. Your forces suffer losses but your military supply ships reach Cuba.

Five — Your military supply ships reach Cuba by evading the U.S. naval blockade.

Four — An equal number of Soviet and U.S. ships are sunk in battle but your military supply ships reach Cuba.

Three — Your naval commanders realize they are outnumbered and surrender to U.S. forces.

Two — Your naval forces are destroyed in battle.

One — Your naval forces are destroyed in battle. The Soviet air force stationed in Cuba is also destroyed while attempting to protect your ships.

4. Secret Option: The Soviet Union has short-range, tactical nuclear missiles in Cuba ready for launch. These missiles cannot reach Florida but could be used to stop a U.S. invasion of Cuba. The other groups are not sure about the status of these missiles. You may announce your intention to launch tactical nuclear missiles only if the United States announces plans to invade Cuba. Use of the missiles would annihilate a U.S. invasion force before it could establish a base on the island. Be aware, however, that no country has used nuclear weapons since 1945. Launching tactical missiles against the United States could have catastrophic consequences.

5. The Soviet Union may launch a first strike of nuclear weapons against the United States. This option requires that you roll a die to determine the outcome of your action. Below is a range of possible outcomes:

Six — Your nuclear weapons kill millions of Americans and prevent the U.S. military from retaliating against you for twenty class minutes.

Five-One — Your nuclear weapons kill millions of Americans, but the U.S. retaliatory strike kills tens of millions of Soviets.

Cuba — Secret and Confidential

Introduction: In this exercise, you and your classmates will go back in time to October 22, 1962 — the day when President Kennedy publicly announced the U.S. response to the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. Your group has been called upon to represent Cuba in the Cuban missile crisis. Your group, along with groups representing the United States and the Soviet Union, will try to achieve a set of secret and confidential objectives. Each group will make use of a limited number of options to achieve its objectives. In addition, a fourth group, serving as United Nations (UN) mediators, will try to negotiate an end to the crisis. In considering the actions of your group, you should use Parts I and II of the background reading to predict the objectives and options of the countries involved in the crisis.

The Cuban Position: A new government came to power in your country in 1959 under the leadership of Fidel Castro. Since that time, your relations with the United States have steadily worsened. Last year, the United States sponsored an invasion of Cuba to destroy your country's communist revolution. Fortunately, you have a powerful ally — the Soviet Union. The Soviets are attempting to install forty-three long-range nuclear missiles in Cuba to help protect communism. On October 15, 1962, however, the United States discovered the missiles. Now, one week later, your group has come together to decide on Cuba's course of action during this crisis.

Organizing Your Group: Your group should first choose a prime minister. The job of the prime minister is to take responsibility for making decisions after listening to the opinions of everyone in the group. The other members of your group will advise the prime minister and negotiate with the United States at the UN and with the Soviet Union.

Crisis Rules: Any member of your group may negotiate at the UN or with the Soviet Union, but only two members may leave your group's headquarters at any one time. No member may stay away from your group for more than fifteen minutes. You should know that the United States and Soviet Union cannot undertake military action during the first twenty minutes of the simulation. Finally, the prime minister is responsible for ensuring that all members of your group properly perform their roles.

Cuban Objectives: Your group's goal is to achieve as many of the following objectives as possible, either by signing agreements or by taking military action. Note that your objectives have different point values.

5 points — Ensure that the United States will not attack the government of Fidel Castro.

5 points — Keep Soviet missiles in Cuba.

5 points — Prevent a U.S. attack from damaging Cuba.

3 points — Receive supplies from Soviet ships.

3 points — End the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba.

3 points — Forbid Cuban exiles in the United States from attacking Cuba.

3 points — Turn over the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo to Cuba.

Cuban Options: Read through your options carefully to understand what Cuba can do and what it cannot do. Note that you have possible military options, as well as diplomatic options.

1. Cuba may pursue diplomacy to gain its objectives by negotiating with the United States and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is your ally, and you may speak directly with Soviet representatives at any time. On the other hand, you may negotiate with representatives of the United States only in the presence of a UN mediator.

Cuba — Secret and Confidential (Page 2)

To begin the negotiation process, the prime minister's advisers should write down proposals for an agreement based on Cuban objectives. For example, they might propose the following to open negotiations:

1. The United States agrees not to attack the government of Fidel Castro.
2. The United States agrees to end the economic embargo against Cuba.

Of course, your group should not expect the United States to immediately accept your proposals. Once your advisers begin negotiating at the UN, you will find that the United States has its own proposals to present. The UN representatives should help you to develop an agreement that contains something attractive for everyone involved. Before your prime minister signs anything, your group should study the agreement to make sure that you have achieved some of your country's objectives.

2. Cuba may conduct a bombing raid on an American city in the Southeast. The raid would have only a symbolic impact and would not affect U.S. military capabilities. This option may be exercised only once.

3. Cuba may publicly threaten to attack the United States with nuclear weapons. This would be only a threat. In reality, the Soviets have maintained complete control of their missile facilities on your island. You are not even sure if there are nuclear missiles in Cuba ready for launch.

4. In the event of a U.S. attack against Cuba, you may try to persuade the Soviets to respond with nuclear weapons. Your Soviet allies may have not considered this option. You must decide whether or not to discuss this subject with them.

United Nations Mediators — Secret and Confidential

Introduction: In this exercise, you and your classmates will go back in time to October 22, 1962 — the day when President Kennedy publicly announced the U.S. response to the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba. Your group has been called upon to represent the United Nations (UN) in the Cuban missile crisis. Your group will try to negotiate an end to the crisis. At the same time, groups representing the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba will try to achieve a set of secret and confidential objectives. Each group will make use of a limited number of options to achieve its objectives. In considering the actions of your group, you should use Parts I and II of the background reading to predict the objectives and options of the countries involved in the crisis.

UN Objectives: Your group's goal is to try to bring this crisis to an end without military conflict. You should know that the countries involved have the ability to take military action. You should also know that each of the three groups will be pursuing a separate set of objectives. In some cases, the objectives of one country will conflict with the objectives of other countries. As UN mediators, you must work to find areas where countries can agree. Your chief objectives are to:

1. *Negotiate signed agreements to end the crisis.* Your agreements do not need to be signed by all three countries. You may be able to negotiate agreements between the United States and either the Soviet Union or Cuba. However, an agreement signed by three countries will be valued more highly by your teacher than an agreement between two countries.

2. *Conclude the crisis without military conflict.* You should try to engage all three countries in negotiation as soon as possible. Emphasize that they have more to gain by signing an agreement than by exercising military options. Your group's ability to prevent or minimize military conflict will be an important factor in the evaluation you receive.

Organizing Your Group: Your group should first choose a secretary general. The job of the secretary general is to assume the leading role in developing agreements. The secretary general will be called upon to report the progress of negotiations at the midway point of each class period. The secretary general should also assign one person in your group to work directly with the United States, another person to work with the Soviet Union, and a third person to work with Cuba. These three people will report proposals for agreements.

Procedure: The UN group will be located in the center of the classroom. You may send individuals out to negotiate with the three countries separately, or you may invite group representatives to the UN. To be valid, agreements must be signed by the leaders of the countries involved. An agreement will remain valid unless all of the signatories state in writing that the agreement is no longer valid. Agreements should be given to your teacher after they are signed.

Developing Agreements: To develop ideas for agreements, keep in mind what you have read in Parts I and II of the background reading about the objectives of each country. For example, you know from your reading that the United States would not accept the presence of Soviet missiles in Cuba. At the same time, both the Cubans and the Soviets wanted a guarantee that the United States would not attack Castro's government. Using this information, you could propose the following compromise:

The United States agrees not to attack Cuba if Soviet missiles are removed from the island.

The first step is to gain an understanding of what each country wants to achieve. Begin by making lists of probable objectives for the United States, the Soviet Union, and Cuba from the information in Part II. This will help you draw up proposals that might lead to an agreement. Try to develop as many ideas for compromise as possible. That way, you will have a better chance of involving all three countries in a peaceful solution to the crisis.

Examining the Documents of the Cuban Missile Crisis

Objectives:

Students will:

- Analyze and interpret the most important documents of the missile crisis.
- Identify the most significant passages in the documents under consideration.
- Gain insight into the policy choices facing U.S. and Soviet leaders.

Required Reading:

Students should have read Khrushchev's October 26, 1962, and October 27, 1962, letters to Kennedy (see pages 58-64 of the Supplementary Documents in the student text), and completed "Khrushchev to Kennedy: Documents from the Cuban Missile Crisis."

In the Classroom:

1. Reviewing the Letters — Ask students to compare the styles of the two Khrushchev letters. Note that the first letter has a more personal, emotional tone, as well as a style that is often rambling and disjointed. In contrast, Khrushchev states his case much more directly and succinctly in the second letter. What were the main differences in the substance of the two letters? Call on students to identify the most meaningful paragraphs of the letters. Most important are paragraphs 16, 22, and 25 in the October 26 letter, and paragraphs 6, 7, 10, 12, and 13 in the October 27 letter.

2. Student Responses — Invite students to share their replies to Khrushchev. How do students weigh the relative strengths and weaknesses of the United States and the Soviet Union at the time of the missile crisis. Can the classroom consensus be characterized as hawkish, owlish, or dovish?

3. Assessing Kennedy's Reply — Instruct students to read Kennedy's actual response of October 27, 1962 (see page 65 of the Supplementary Documents in the student text). Remind students that most ExComm members did not believe Khrushchev would accept Kennedy's proposal. What were the factors that led Kennedy to address only the October 26 letter while ignoring the October 27 letter? Why did the United States refuse to consider Khrushchev's proposal in the October 27 letter to trade the removal of missiles from Cuba for the removal of missiles from Turkey? Why did Kennedy and his advisers conclude that the first letter represented Khrushchev's personal sentiments while the second letter reflected a consensus of top Soviet leaders? (Note that some ExComm members saw the second letter as evidence of a power struggle within the Kremlin.) Ask students to assume Khrushchev's perspective in considering Kennedy's response. Should Khrushchev have accepted Kennedy's offer? What were the primary concerns affecting his decision?

Homework:

Students should read Part III of the background reading and complete "Study Guide — Part III."

Khrushchev to Kennedy: Documents from the Cuban Missile Crisis

The Setting: You have been assigned to read two of the most critical documents of the Cuban missile crisis. Both are letters written by Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev to President John Kennedy. The first letter arrived in Washington the evening of October 26, 1962. Before Kennedy and his advisers had time to respond, a second letter arrived the morning of October 27.

Analyzing the Letters: Khrushchev's letters contain differences in tone and substance. Moreover, the Soviet leader's key points are not clearly stated. You should begin by highlighting the paragraphs in which Khrushchev indicates his terms for resolving the crisis.

Preparing a Response: After you have a firm understanding of the Soviet position, you should put yourself in the place of President Kennedy in developing a response. Keep in mind that the main objectives guiding U.S. policymakers during the missile crisis included:

- Removing Soviet missiles from Cuba.
- Honoring U.S. commitments to Turkey and other allies.
- Avoiding an escalation of the crisis that could lead to war with the Soviets.

The first part of your reply to Khrushchev should outline the main elements of a U.S. proposal to resolve the crisis. You will be evaluated on your ability to analyze Khrushchev's message and apply that interpretation to crafting an appropriate response. Below is an example of how you might begin your response.

Dear Chairman Khrushchev,

In the interest of preserving world peace, I propose the following:

1. The Soviet Union will immediately remove all missiles from Cuba.

2. The United States will sponsor a meeting of the Organization of American States within the coming year to address the issue of safeguarding the security of Cuba....

After you have completed your response to Khrushchev, answer the following questions:

1. Which passages from Khrushchev's letters indicate the main points of the Soviet position?

2. How do you expect the Soviets to respond to your proposal?

3. Would you describe your proposal as taking the perspective of a hawk, an owl, or a dove? Explain your answer.

Tracking the Policies of Fidel Castro

Objectives:

Students will:
- Evaluate the leading developments in U.S.-Soviet-Cuban relations since 1962.
- Analyze the factors that have influenced the policies of Fidel Castro.

Required Reading:

Students should have read Part III of the background reading and completed "Study Guide — Part III."

Handouts:

- "Hypothetical Statements by Fidel Castro" (page 24).

In the Classroom:

1. *Setting the Stage* — Before the lesson begins, write the following (the four main headings of Part III of the background reading) on the chalkboard:
   Castro 1 — Exporting the Cuban Revolution
   Castro 2 — The Soviet-Cuban Alliance
   Castro 3 — Reagan Battles Communism
   Castro 4 — End of the Cold War Marks New Era
Note that the four sections of Part III correspond with four distinct stages in Fidel Castro's foreign policy.

2. *Completing the Worksheet* — Distribute "Hypothetical Statements by Fidel Castro." Students should match each statement with one of the four sections of Part III of the background reading by writing Castro 1, Castro 2, Castro 3, or Castro 4 in the blank space beside the statement. Make it clear that the statements reflect both the historical events described in Part III and Castro's overall position.

3. *Analyzing Student Responses* — When the worksheet has been completed, call on students to identify the historical event or key phrase in each statement that alerted them to the correct answer. What historical developments have accounted for the changes in Castro's position? How did U.S. policy in the Caribbean and Central America influence Castro's direction?

Suggestions:

Assign the worksheet to groups of three or four students. Each group should appoint a leader responsible for reading the statements and recording the group responses on the worksheet. Insist that groups arrive at their answers through consensus rather than majority rule or a division of responsibility. Recommend that group members resolve disagreements by analyzing the reasons behind conflicting answers.

Extra Challenge:

Do not allow students to refer to their textbook or notes when filling out the worksheet.

Answer Key: 1.–Castro 3; 2.–Castro 1; 3.–Castro 4; 4.–Castro 1; 5.–Castro 4; 6.–Castro 2; 7.–Castro 3; 8.–Castro 4; 9.–Castro 2; 10.–Castro 3; 11.–Castro 4; 12.–Castro 1; 13.–Castro 2.

Study Guide — Part III
Three Decades of the Tangled Triangle

1. Why does Che Guevara symbolize the most radical period of the Cuban revolution?

2. Why did the Alliance for Progress fail to achieve most of the program's original goals?

3. Why did Soviet leaders view Cuba as a valuable ally?

4. How did President Reagan change the direction of U.S. foreign policy in the Caribbean and Central America?

5. How has the collapse of the Soviet Union affected Cuba?

6. How has the end of the Cold War affected the U.S. role in the Caribbean and Central America?

Name:

Hypothetical Statements by Fidel Castro

Instructions: Each of the thirteen statements below *could* have been made by Cuban leader Fidel Castro. Your assignment is to match each statement with one of the four sections in Part III of the background reading (Castro 1 — Exporting the Cuban Revolution; Castro 2 — The Soviet-Cuban Alliance; Castro 3 — Reagan Battles Communism; Castro 4 — End of the Cold War Marks New Era). Write either Castro 1, Castro 2, Castro 3, or Castro 4 in the blank space beside each statement.

For each statement, you should consider both the underlying values and the historical clues presented. Note the following example:

> *Statement:* We will do everything in our power to defend the revolution of the Nicaraguan people against the military might of U.S. imperialism.
>
> *Answer:* Castro 3 is correct because the events of the statement correspond to the period of the Reagan administration's support for the *contra* forces in Nicaragua, while the values reflect Castro's determination to oppose U.S. interests in Central America.

_____ 1. The invasion of Grenada by imperialist forces has shown us just how far the United States will go to destroy our allies.

_____ 2. The struggle of Che Guevara will spread the fire of revolution to every corner of Latin America.

_____ 3. If the course of events makes Cuba the last communist nation on earth, I promise that the Cuban people will defend communism to our last drop of blood.

_____ 4. We will create an economy that changes how people feel about work. Forget the economic lessons of the past. The leadership of the revolution will guide Cuba to a glorious future.

_____ 5. The U.S. invasion of Panama is a sign that the United States will stop at nothing to crush its foes.

_____ 6. The interests of Cuba and the Soviet Union are identical in strengthening the forces of communism around the world.

_____ 7. Central America is today the scene of a critical struggle. The *contra* rebels in Nicaragua and the government troops of El Salvador are nothing but an extension of the U.S. military.

_____ 8. The Soviet Union has betrayed both the values of communism and its allies.

_____ 9. Our African brothers have called upon us to join the struggle against imperialism in Angola. We are happy to fight by their side.

_____ 10. The progress of the Sandinista revolution toward socialism is a triumph for Cuba. We will continue to provide aid to the new government to ensure the success of the revolution.

_____ 11. I must warn the Cuban people that we face difficult times ahead. Many of our allies have fallen and our enemy to the north is seeking an opportunity to destroy us.

_____ 12. The Soviet Union does not understand the need for revolution in Latin America. We must act now to help overthrow corrupt, capitalist governments in Latin America.

_____ 13. We have made mistakes in our economic development. Now we must look to our Soviet friends for a helping hand.

Role Playing the Three Options: Organization and Preparation

Objectives:

Students will:

- Analyze the issues that frame the current debate on U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America.
- Identify the core underlying values of the options.
- Integrate the arguments and beliefs of the options and the background reading into a persuasive, coherent presentation.
- Work cooperatively within groups to organize effective presentations.

Handouts:

- "Presenting Your Option" (page 26) for option groups.
- "Expressing Key Values" (page 27) for option groups.
- "Input from the Caribbean and Central America" (page 28) for regional representatives.
- "Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate" (page 29) for committee members.

In the Classroom:

1. Planning for Group Work — In order to save time in the classroom, form student groups before beginning Day Eight. During the class period, students will be preparing for the Day Nine simulation. Remind them to incorporate the background reading into their presentations and questions.

2a. Option Groups — Form three groups of four students. Assign an option to each group. Distribute "Presenting Your Option" to the three option groups. Inform students that each option group will be called upon in Day Nine to present the case for its assigned option to members of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. Explain that option groups should follow the instructions in "Presenting Your Option." Note that the option groups should begin by assigning each member a role.

2b. Regional Representatives — Form a group of four students to represent the countries of the Caribbean and Central America. Distribute "Input from the Caribbean and Central America" to the group. Inform the regional representatives that they will be called upon in Day Nine to explain the relevance of U.S. policy in the Caribbean and Central America.

2c. Committee Members — The remainder of the class will serve as members of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. Distribute "Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate" to each committee member. While the option groups are preparing their presentations, committee members should develop cross-examination questions for Day Nine. (See "Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate.") Remind committee members that they are expected to turn in their questions at the end of the simulation.

Suggestions:

In smaller classes, other teachers or administrators may be invited to serve as members of the committee. In larger classes, additional roles — such as those of newspaper reporter or lobbyist — may be assigned to students.

Extra Challenge:

Ask the option groups to design a poster or a political cartoon illustrating the best case for their options.

Homework:

Students should complete preparations for the simulation.

Presenting Your Option

Preparing Your Presentation

Your Assignment: Your group has been called upon to appear before the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate. Your assignment is to persuade the committee members that your option should be the basis for U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. You will be judged on how well you present your option.

Organizing Your Group: Each member of your group will take a specific role. Below is a brief explanation of the responsibilities for each role.

1. *Spokesperson:* Your job is to explain the option of your group to the Committee on Foreign Relations in a three-to-five minute presentation. In preparing your presentation, you will receive help from the other members of your group. You should include arguments from their areas of expertise. Keep in mind, though, that you are expected to take the lead in organizing your group. Read your option and review the background reading to build a strong case for your option. The "Expressing Key Values" worksheet will help you organize your thoughts.

2. *Security Adviser:* Your job is to advise the spokesperson of your group on why your option best addresses the security challenges facing the United States in the Caribbean and Central America. Carefully read your option, and then review Parts II and III of the background reading. Make sure that your area of expertise is reflected in the presentation of your group spokesperson. The "Expressing Key Values" worksheet will help you organize your thoughts.

3. *Economic Adviser:* Your job is to advise the spokesperson of your group on why your option best serves the economic interests of the United States in the Caribbean and Central America. Carefully read your option, and then review Part III of the background reading. Make sure that your area of expertise is reflected in the presentation of your group spokesperson. The "Expressing Key Values" worksheet will help you organize your thoughts.

4. *Historian:* Your job is to advise the spokesperson of your group on how the lessons of history justify the position of your option. Carefully read your option, and then review Part I of the background reading. Make sure that your area of expertise is reflected in the presentation of your group spokesperson. The "Expressing Key Values" worksheet will help you organize your thoughts.

Making Your Case

After your preparations are completed, your spokesperson will deliver a three-to-five minute presentation to the Committee on Foreign Relations. The "Expressing Key Values" worksheet and other notes may be used, but the spokesperson should speak clearly and convincingly. During the presentations, you should try to identify the weak points of the other options. After all of the groups have presented their options, members of the Senate committee will ask you cross-examination questions. Any member of your group may respond during the cross-examination period.

Expressing Key Values

The notion of values lies at the core of this unit. Each of the three options in this unit revolves around a distinct set of values. The opening two paragraphs of your option are devoted to making a convincing case for the values that are represented. The term "values," however, is not easy to define. Most often, we think of values in connection with our personal lives. Our attitudes toward our families, friends, and communities are a reflection of our personal values.

Values play a critical role in our civic life as well. In the United States, our country's political system and foreign policy have been shaped by a wide range of values. The high value many Americans place on freedom, democracy, and individual liberty rings loudly throughout U.S. history. For most of our country's existence, the impulse to spread American values beyond our borders was outweighed by the desire to remain independent of foreign entanglements. Since World War II, however, the United States has played a larger role in world affairs than any other nation. At times, American leaders have emphasized the values of human rights and cooperation. On other occasions, the values of stability and security have been stressed.

Some values fit together well. Others are in conflict. Americans are constantly being forced to choose among competing values in our ongoing debate about foreign policy. Your job is to identify and explain the most important values underlying your option. These values should be clearly expressed by every member of your group. This worksheet will help you organize your thoughts.

1. What are the two most important values underlying your option?

   a.

   b.

2. According to the values of your option, what should be the role of the United States in the world?

3. Why should the values of your option be the guiding force for U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America?

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Name:

Input from the Caribbean and Central America

Your group represents the countries of the Caribbean and Central America. You have been called upon to explain the impact of U.S. policy on your countries to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate in a five-minute presentation on Day Nine. Your job is not to voice your opinion on the three options. Rather, you are expected to inform the committee members about the concerns and challenges of the Caribbean and Central America. This worksheet will help you prepare your presentation.

1. What does the Committee on Foreign Relations need to know about the concerns and challenges of the Caribbean and Central America in order to intelligently chart U.S. policy?

2. How do the Caribbean and Central America affect the interests of the United States?

3. What historical lessons should be drawn from past relations between the United States and your region?

4. How do you expect the relationship between the United States and your region to change now that the Cold War has ended?

Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate

Hearing on U.S. Policy toward the Caribbean and Central America

Your Role

As a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate, you consider issues relating to our country's foreign policy. As you know, the end of the Cold War has forced U.S. leaders to rethink our country's policies toward the Caribbean and Central America. The definition of national security has changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union, while economic issues have acquired a more prominent position in U.S. foreign policy. These hearings will introduce you to three distinct approaches to U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. In addition, a delegation representing the countries of the Caribbean and Central America will discuss the impact of U.S. policy on the region.

Your Assignment

While the three option groups and the regional representatives are organizing their presentations, you should prepare two questions regarding each of the options. Your teacher will collect these questions at the end of Day Nine.

Your questions should be challenging and critical. For example, a good question for Option 1 might be:

> *With the Cold War over, how does Cuba threaten our country's interests?*

On Day Nine, the three option groups and the regional representatives will present their positions. After their presentations are completed, your teacher will call on you and your fellow committee members to ask questions. The "Evaluation Form" you receive is designed for you to record your impressions of the option groups. Part I should be filled out in class after the option groups make their presentations. Part II should be completed as homework. After this activity is concluded, you may be called upon to explain your evaluation of the option groups.

Role Playing the Three Options: Debate and Discussion

Objectives:

Students will:

- Articulate the leading values that frame the debate on U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America.
- Explore, debate, and evaluate multiple perspectives on U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America.
- Sharpen rhetorical skills through debate and discussion.
- Cooperate with classmates in staging a persuasive presentation.

Handouts:

- "Evaluation Form" (page 31) for the committee members.

In the Classroom:

1. Setting the Stage — Organize the room so that the three option groups and the regional representatives face a row of desks reserved for the Committee on Foreign Relations. Distribute "Evaluation Form" to the committee members. Instruct members of the committee to fill out the first part of their "Evaluation Form" during the course of the period. The second part of the worksheet should be completed as homework.

2. Managing the Simulation — Explain that the simulation will begin with a five-minute presentation by the spokesperson of the regional representatives. Next, the spokespersons for the option groups will make three-to-five minute presentations. Encourage the spokespersons to speak clearly and convincingly.

3. Guiding Discussion — Following the presentations, invite members of the Committee on Foreign Relations to ask cross-examination questions. Make sure that each committee member has an opportunity to ask at least one question. The questions should be evenly distributed among all three option groups. If time permits, encourage members of the option groups to challenge the positions of the other groups, and invite comments from the regional representatives. During cross-examination, allow any option group member to respond. (As an alternative approach, permit cross-examination following the presentation of each option.)

Homework:

Students should read each of the three options, then moving beyond these options they should fill out "Focusing Your Thoughts" and complete "Your Option Four."

Evaluation Form
Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate

Part I

What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

What was the most persuasive argument presented against this option?

Option 1

Option 2

Option 3

Part II

Which group presented its option most effectively? Explain your answer.

Applying Policy Options to Regional Crises

Objectives:

Students will:

- Articulate coherent recommendations for U.S. policy based on personally held values and historical understanding.
- Critique individual policy recommendations from multiple perspectives.
- Weigh the implications of individual policy recommendations in the context of hypothetical regional crises.

Handouts:

"Weighing the U.S. Role in the Caribbean and Central America" (page 35).

In the Classroom:

1. Analyzing Beliefs — Call on members of the Senate committee to share their evaluations of the option groups. Which arguments were most convincing? Which beliefs were most appealing? What were the main threats addressed by each of the options?

2. Evaluating Student Options — Call on students to summarize their own options. Which values are featured most prominently? What image of the U.S. role in the world is projected by the options? Invite students to critique the options from the perspective of the Caribbean and Central America. How would a communist official in Cuba respond to the options? What about a business owner in Costa Rica, a newspaper editor in Nicaragua, or a peasant in El Salvador?

3. Considering Hypothetical Crises — Distribute "Weighing the U.S. Role in the Caribbean and Central America." Explain that the worksheet presents seven hypothetical events set in the Caribbean and Central America. Review each of the scenarios with the class and invite students to recommend a U.S. response from the perspective of their options. Press students to identify the underlying values of their policy recommendations. Call on them to offer historical lessons to support their proposals. Encourage students with contradictory views to voice their opinions.

Extra Challenge:

As homework, instruct students to write a letter to a member of Congress or President Clinton on their ideas for U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. In the first part of the letter, students should present the values and assumptions underlying their viewpoint, while in the second part of the letter students should present a coherent set of policy recommendations.

Encourage students to explore the local dimension of the debate on U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. For example, students could be asked to contact organizations that have a deeply rooted interest in U.S. policy in the region. Business associations involved in trade in the Caribbean and Central America and human rights groups have a long history of involvement. Ethnic organizations, church groups, and friendship societies are also active in the foreign policy arena. In addition, recent immigrants, university students, and former Peace Corps volunteers may be able to offer special insights into the U.S. role in the Caribbean and Central America.

Focusing Your Thoughts

Instructions: You have had an opportunity to consider three options for U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. Now it is your turn to look at each of the options from your own perspective. Try each one on for size. Think about how the options address your concerns and hopes. You will find that each has its own risks and trade-offs, advantages and disadvantages. After you complete this worksheet, you will be asked to develop your own option on this issue.

Ranking the Options

Which of the options below do you prefer? Keep in mind that the beliefs you support most strongly should guide your choice. Rank the options from "1" to "3," with "1" being your first choice.

___ **Option 1: Keep Up Our Guard**

___ **Option 2: Extend a Helping Hand**

___ **Option 3: Recognize Our Limitations**

Beliefs

Considering the statements below will help you answer the first two questions of "Your Option Four." Rate each of them according to your personal beliefs:

1 = Strongly Support 3 = Oppose 5 = Undecided
2 = Support 4 = Strongly Oppose

___ Meddling in the development of other societies is counter-productive and dangerous.

___ Forging stronger economic links with our neighbors through trade and investment is in the best interests of all countries involved.

___ The problems of the Caribbean and Central America, unavoidably, affect the United States.

___ The greatest threats facing the United States are all at home: budget deficits, mediocre schools, crime, and an inadequate health care system.

___ The end of the Cold War has not eliminated the threats to U.S. security stemming from the Caribbean and Central America.

___ Imposing American values on foreign countries runs counter to our country's respect for freedom and self-government.

___ The United States has a vital role to play in helping promote economic development in the Caribbean and Central America.

___ U.S.-style democracy and the free-market economic system should serve as the foundation for all societies.

___ As citizens of the richest country in the world, Americans have an obligation to improve the lives of the world's poor.

Creating Your Own Option

Your next assignment is to create an option that reflects your own beliefs and opinions. You may borrow heavily from one option, or you may combine ideas from two options. Or you may take a new approach altogether. There are, of course, no perfect solutions. And there is no right or wrong answer. Rather, you should strive to craft an option that is logical and persuasive. Be careful of contradictions. For example, the United States should not reduce its involvement in the Caribbean and Central America if you believe that the region is a source of significant security threats to our country.

Name:

Your Option Four

Instructions: In this exercise, you will offer your own recommendations for U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. Your responses to "Focusing Your Thoughts" should help you identify the guiding values of your proposal.

1. What values should guide U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America?

2. What are the main interests of the United States in the Caribbean and Central America?

3. What policies should the United States pursue toward the Caribbean and Central America to put your values into action?

4. What are the two strongest arguments opposing your option?

   a.

   b.

5. What are the two strongest arguments supporting your option?

   a.

   b.

Weighing the U.S. Role in the Caribbean and Central America

Instructions: Below are seven hypothetical events set in the Caribbean and Central America. Review each of the scenarios and recommend a U.S. response from the perspective of your own option.

Scenario #1

Fidel Castro has died of a heart attack. The Cuban government has declared martial law. The situation in Havana is calm, but in the eastern part of the island a group of army officers has seized a military base. The officers claim to represent democratic forces in Cuba and have appealed to the United States for help. The Cuban government has warned the United States not to interfere.

Scenario #2

Army officers loyal to the Sandinistas have staged a coup in Nicaragua a few weeks before national elections were scheduled to take place. The rebels have control of the capital, Managua, but heavy fighting is reported in the towns of southern Nicaragua and along the Atlantic coast. Former *contra* leaders are organizing the resistance to the Sandinistas. Costa Rican officials report that the fighting has spilled into their country and demand that Nicaraguan forces immediately withdraw.

Scenario #3

A group of democratic nations in the Caribbean and Central America, led by Haiti and Costa Rica, have called for the establishment of a new trade bloc involving the United States and the region. Under the proposal, member states would be required to remove barriers to free trade among themselves over the next ten years. Membership would be limited to countries that uphold democratic principles and protect human rights. Textile manufacturers and sugar growers in the United States strongly oppose the proposal, claiming that their industries will lose hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Scenario #4

After declaring that the government has violated the peace agreement arranged by the United Nations, anti-American rebels in El Salvador have launched a nationwide military campaign to take power. Reports indicate that the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) has reasserted control over the countryside and has overwhelmed government forces in the capital. El Salvador's leadership is reportedly making plans to leave the country within the coming days.

Scenario #5

After launching a crash program of free-market reform, the Guatemalan government has announced that it cannot meet interest payments on loans to U.S. banks. The government claims that drought has severely damaged its export crops while a hurricane has destroyed a new textile factory. Critics of the government, however, blame the financial problems on official corruption. Meanwhile, anti-American guerrillas have stepped up their campaign to overthrow the government.

Scenario #6

The United Nations has announced that as a result of bad weather and a lack of fuel to power agricultural machinery, Cuba will soon face a serious food shortage. Thousands of Cuban "boat people" have attempted to reach U.S. shores in recent weeks. Cuban police have reportedly abandoned efforts to stop the flood of would-be emigrants from the island. Fidel Castro has begun to negotiate with some European countries for aid, although he has insisted that his government be in charge of distributing relief supplies.

Scenario #7

The newly formed Coalition of Caribbean and Central American Nations, consisting of all the countries of the region, has announced a cooperative effort to halt the destruction of rain forests throughout the Caribbean and Central America. To carry out the program, the coalition is requesting that the United States double its economic aid to the region over the next five years.

Alternative Five-Day Lesson Plan

Day 1: See Day One of the Suggested Ten-Day Lesson Plan. (Students should have read Part I of the background reading and completed "Study Guide — Part I" before beginning the unit.) Students should read Part II of the background reading and complete "Study Guide — Part II" as homework.

Days 2 & 3: See Days Three and Four of the Suggested Ten-Day Lesson Plan. Students should read Part III of the background reading and complete "Study Guide — Part III" as homework.

Day 4: Assign each student one of the three options, and allow a few minutes for students to familiarize themselves with the mindsets of the options. Call on students to evaluate the benefits and trade-offs of their assigned options. How do the options differ in their assumptions about the problems and challenges presented by the Caribbean and Central America? What is the international image of the United States projected by each of the options? What are the main differences in the policy recommendations of the options? Moving beyond the options, ask students to imagine that they have been called upon to advise the president on U.S. policy toward the Caribbean and Central America. What concerns would be at the top of their agenda? Which values should guide the direction of U.S. policy? Students should complete "Focusing Your Thoughts" and "Your Option Four" as homework.

Day 5: See Day Ten of the Suggested Ten-Day Lesson Plan.

The contents of this unit are being distributed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. If an education service provider uses funds under a program subject to section 439 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232h) to adopt this project, the education service provider must comply with part 98 of title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (Student Rights in Research, Experimental Programs and Testing) which contains the regulations implementing that section of GEPA.

Making Choices Work in Your Classroom

Like the art of cooking, cooperative group learning is a skill that is rarely perfected on the first attempt, either by teachers or students. Yet with careful preparation, guidance, and practice significant gains can be made quickly. No single recipe guarantees success with cooperative learning or the Choices approach in every classroom. That would be impossible, since each classroom differs in its organization and size, and its unique collection of personalities and needs. However, this section of the Teacher's Resource Book offers a variety of ingredients for teachers to use as they adapt Choices curricula to their classrooms. The suggested ingredients that follow have been drawn from educational research on student-centered instruction and, more important, from the experiences of teachers who have used Choices curricula successfully in their classrooms over the past six years. Educators who have questions about using Choices curricula in their classrooms are encouraged to contact the Choices Education Project in writing, or by calling (401)863-3155. The Choices staff includes experienced classroom teachers who will be pleased to speak with you.

Designing Cooperative Learning Groups

Group Size: The key to successful cooperative group work is having a group assignment that is complex enough to require the participation of all group members. Planning the size and composition of working groups in advance is crucial to the successful use of Choices curricula. Research indicates that the ideal size for a cooperative learning group is four or five students. This is certainly the ideal size for group assignments in Choices units. When using Choices units in larger classes, the size of option (or, in the case of this unit, Future) groups may be expanded to six or seven students. However, it is important to keep in mind that whenever the number of students in a group is increased, the number of roles and expected outcomes must also be expanded.

Group Composition: A strength of cooperative learning is that it creates opportunities for students to work together in new combinations on challenging tasks. Cooperative learning not only requires the academic skills of reading, writing, and critical thinking, but the interpersonal skills of communication, negotiation, and problem-solving. In most cases, this style of instruction and learning is most effective when students are assigned to groups by the teacher rather than being allowed to work with their friends. While random group selection can be effective, in most classes successful group composition requires that the teacher consider the personalities, strengths, and needs of the students.

Groups comprised of students with diverse strengths, talents, and needs are ideal. For example, artistic students might be assigned to different groups to share their talents and perspectives, while less verbal students could be placed in groups with more outgoing students to help draw them into the lesson. Whenever possible, teachers should try to prevent one student from dominating a group. Explaining the instructions, roles, and ground rules for cooperative learning (see below) helps prevent this. Teachers may choose to group aggressive students with each other, leaving room in other groups for less assertive students to emerge as leaders. Finally, even though the negotiation of roles among the students in a group can be a valuable part of the cooperative learning experience, teachers might choose to assign certain roles, such as group spokesperson, in order to encourage leadership from more reticent students and to keep more aggressive students from dominating.

Students may initially complain about being assigned to groups that do not include their closest friends. We have found that, at the conclusion of the assignment, they will usually express satisfaction with their assigned partners, recognize that they got more accomplished, and sometimes even acknowledge the start of new friendships. The additional time involved in planning group size and composition will pay off when students are actively engaged, debating, and thinking critically.

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Preparing Students for Cooperative Learning

Provide Clear Written Instructions: As with any assignment, students benefit from instructions and guidelines that clearly outline expectations and how they will be accomplished. These should be given to students in writing and reviewed with the class. Afterwards, as questions arise within groups, students should refer to the written instructions and attempt to answer each other's questions before asking for the teacher's assistance.

Establish Ground Rules: Especially when cooperative learning is a new experience, students benefit from the establishment of ground rules that are explained before groups are formed. Ground rules must be kept simple, and should be designed to keep students involved and on task. Posting these rules in a prominent place in the classroom can be very effective. An example of simple but effective ground rules for the cooperative group assignments could be:

Everybody has a role (or a job)
Everybody participates
Nobody dominates
Nobody interrupts

These rules can be enforced by appointing one student to serve as the group manager. The teacher can make it clear that one of the group manager's responsibilities is to enforce the ground rules as the group explores its assigned option and prepares its presentation. The group manager might also be required to make sure that members of the group stay on task and attempt to solve problems before asking for the teacher's assistance. Ground rules that are clear and used consistently can, over time, become an integral component of the classroom, facilitating learning and keeping students on task.

Managing the Choices Simulation

Recognize Time Limitations: At the heart of the Choices approach is the role-play simulation in which students advocate different options, question each other, and debate. Just as thoughtful preparation is necessary to set the stage for cooperative group learning, careful planning for the presentations and debate can increase the effectiveness of the simulation. Time is the essential ingredient to keep in mind. A minimum of 45 to 50 minutes is necessary for the presentations and debate. Hence, if only one class period is available, student groups must be ready as soon as class begins. Teachers who have been able to schedule a double period or extend the length of class to one hour report that the extra time is beneficial. When necessary, the role-play simulation can be run over two days, but this disrupts the momentum of the debate. The best strategy for managing the role-play is to establish and enforce strict time limits, such as five minutes for each option presentation, ten minutes for questions and challenges, and the final five minutes of class for wrapping up the debate. It is crucial to make students aware of strict time limits as they prepare their presentations.

Highlight the Importance of Values: During the debate and debriefing, it is important to highlight the role of values in the options. Students should be instructed to identify the core values and priorities underlying the different options.

Moving Beyond the Options

As a culminating activity of a Choices unit, students are expected to articulate their own views of the issue under consideration. An effective way to move beyond the options debate to creating individual options is to have students consider which values in the options framework they hold most dear. Typically, students will hold several of these values simultaneously and will need to prioritize them to reach a considered judgment about the issue at hand. These values should be reflected in their own options and should shape the goals and policies they advocate.

Adjusting for Large and Small Classes

Choices units are designed for an average class of twenty-five students. In larger classes, additional roles, such as those of newspaper reporter or member of a special interest group, can be assigned to increase student participation in the simulation. With larger option groups, additional tasks might be to create a poster, political cartoon, or public service announcement that represents the viewpoint of an option. In smaller classes, the teacher can serve as the moderator of the debate, and administrators, parents, or faculty can be invited to play the roles of congressional leaders. Another alternative is to combine two small classes.

Applying Choices to Ability-Grouped Classes

Choices curricula are developed with the majority of high school students in mind. Choices units are not designed solely for students in honors or advanced placement programs. Nor are they designed specifically for students in remedial classes. However, the units are designed to be flexible enough for high school teachers to adapt for *any* classroom, and they have been used successfully in all kinds of classes. The Choices staff places confidence in the ability of teachers to decide which units are best suited for the courses and students they teach. The following suggestions may assist teachers of higher- and lower-ability classes in adapting Choices curricula to meet the needs of their students.

Lower-Ability Classes: It would be a mistake to believe that the Choices approach is too difficult for students in lower-ability classes. Teachers report that, with certain adaptations, Choices units can motivate higher levels of student participation, thinking, and confidence in lower-ability classes. Feedback from classroom teachers indicates that the following strategies lead to success with Choices in these classes:

- Maintain high expectations for student learning and thinking.
- Classes of all abilities do a better job with Choices the second or third time the approach is used. Skills in collaboration, communication, and critical thinking improve with practice.
- Some units are easier than others because the necessary background is particularly accessible. Use one of these first to give the students some experience with the approach.
- To make background readings more manageable, some teachers have students read aloud in class, stopping to discuss or clarify key points. Other teachers substitute shorter readings from the textbook or another source as background reading.
- Key concepts from the background can be explained in a mini-lecture format.
- Students can review and keep track of the important terms in a unit by creating their own glossary for reference throughout the unit.
- An extra day for review of the background, for group preparation, or for the development of individual options can be very worthwhile.

Higher-Ability Classes: Choices units have much to offer students in higher-ability and advanced placement classes. Students are challenged to understand the internal logic of different arguments and to extrapolate from these while playing the role of advocate. Two-week Choices units are especially rich in historical background, and they highlight the complex relationships among nations through many eras. Choices units on historical topics typically include a wealth of primary source documents for students to read and analyze. These documents can help to prepare students in advanced placement classes for the "Document Based Questions" included on advanced placement examinations. Extra challenge assignments are included in many lesson plans, and every Choices unit includes suggestions for additional reading and research.

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Assessing Student Achievement

Grading Group Assignments: Research suggests that it is counterproductive to give students individual grades on cooperative group assignments. A significant part of the assignment given to the group is to cooperate in achieving a common goal, as opposed to looking out for individual interests. Telling students in advance that the group will receive one grade often motivates group members to hold each other accountable. This can foster group cohesion and lead to better group results. It may be useful to note that in addition to the cooperative group assignments, students complete individual assignments as well in every Choices unit.

Requiring Self-Evaluation: Having students complete self-evaluations is an extremely effective way to make them think about their own learning. Self-evaluations can take many forms and are useful in a variety of circumstances. They are particularly helpful in getting students to think constructively about group collaboration. In developing a self-evaluation tool for students, teachers need to pose clear and direct questions to students. A sample Group Project Self-Evaluation is included on page 26. Each student should complete his/her own evaluation as part of the unit. Two key benefits of student self-evaluation are that it involves students in the assessment process, and that it provides teachers with valuable insights into the contributions of individual students and the dynamics of different groups. These insights can help teachers to organize groups for future cooperative assignments.

Evaluating Student Options: The most important outcomes of a Choices unit are the original options developed and articulated by each student. These will differ significantly from one another, as students identify different values and priorities that shape their viewpoints. These options cannot be graded as right or wrong, but should be evaluated on clarity of expression, logic, and thoroughness. Did the student provide reasons for his/her viewpoint along with supporting evidence? Were the values clear and consistent throughout the option? Did the student identify the risks involved? Did the student present his/her option in a convincing manner?

Testing: In a formal evaluation of the Choices approach, it was demonstrated that students using Choices learned the factual information presented as well as or better than students who were taught in a more traditional lecture-discussion format. However, the larger benefits of the Choices approach were evident when students using Choices demonstrated significantly higher ability to think critically, analyze multiple perspectives, and articulate original viewpoints, compared to students who did not use this approach. Teachers should hold students accountable for learning historical information, concepts, and current events presented in Choices units. However, a simple multiple-choice examination will not allow students to demonstrate the critical thinking and communication skills developed through the Choices unit. If teachers choose to test students, they may wish to explore new models of test design that require students to do more than recognize correct answers. Tests should not replace the development of student options.

For Further Reading: Cohen, Elizabeth G. *Designing Groupwork: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1986).

Publications List

The Choices for the 21st Century Education Project develops curricula for high schools and colleges on current foreign policy issues and offers workshops, institutes, and in-service programs for high school teachers. Course materials place special emphasis on the importance of educating students in their participatory role as citizens. All units incorporate the work of academics and policymakers from a range of perspectives and are classroom tested prior to publication. A new unit is published every three months during the academic year, and all units are updated regularly. For current information on new titles and revisions, call the Choices Education Project at (401) 863-3155.

*Reproducible Units**

- Ending the War against Japan: Science, Morality, and the Atomic Bomb (July 1995, 102 pages)
- Help, Handout, or Hindrance: U.S. Support for the Developing World (June 1995, 66 pages)
- China on the World Stage: Weighing the U.S. Response (March 1995, 77 pages)
- Crisis, Conscience, and Choices: Weimar Germany and the Rise of Hitler (November 1994, 84 pages)
- Russia's Uncertain Transition: Challenges for U.S. Policy (September 1994, 71 pages)
- Keeping the Peace in an Age of Conflict: Debating the U.S. Role (Revised January 1995, 69 pages)
- Charting Russia's Future in the Post-Soviet Era (Revised October 1995, 70 pages)
- After the Cold War: The U.S. Role in Europe's Transition (Revised September 1994, 120 pages)
- U.S. Immigration Policy in an Unsettled World (Revised August 1995, 63 pages)
- Global Environmental Problems: Implications for U.S. Policy (Revised February 1995, 51 pages)
- The Role of the United States in a Changing World (Revised October 1994, 44 pages)
- U.S. Trade Policy: Competing in a Global Economy (Revised January 1995, 58 pages)
- The Limits of Power: The United States in Vietnam (November 1994, second edition, 119 pages)
- Coming to Terms with Power: U.S. Choices after World War II (August 1994, second edition, 68 pages)

A teacher's resource book is included free with each unit ordered at regular price.

High School Textbook

- In the Shadow of the Cold War: The Caribbean and Central America in U.S. Foreign Policy (Revised September 1995, 111 pages, teacher's resource book also included)

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